PLACES OF PUNISHMENT IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

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Abstract

This thesis examines places of punishment in the Synoptic traditions. Four are identified and discussed: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss and the place (ἐκεῖ) where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. In addition, an excursus on Tartarus is included as Tartarus relates closely to the Abyss.

The Gehenna language derives primarily from oracles of judgement in Jeremiah 7:29-34, 19:1-15 and Isaiah 66:24. In the Synoptics it refers consistently to the punishment of the final judgment. It is a fiery place of destruction reserved for the wicked, who will be thrown there and consumed in bodily form.

By contrast, Hades is not a place of punishment but a reference to death. It receives all people, righteous and wicked alike and they remain there until the final judgement. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 appears to depart from this line as it depicts fiery torments in Hades. However, a closer look at its language and structure and a comparison with similar near-contemporary tales, suggest it functions to reject what it appears to endorse.

The Abyss is the place where fallen angels exist in anticipation of the final judgement. In contrast to Hades and Gehenna, there appears to be movement in and out of the Abyss. In the Abyss the power of fallen angels over humanity is severely restricted; when they come out, they cause much suffering. Tartarus is also a prison for fallen angels.

The language of the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth occurs primarily in parables, often in the context of a banquet. The banquet represents the kingdom of God. The phrase depicts punishment primarily as exclusion from the banquet/kingdom. Weeping and gnashing of teeth denote the sorrow and anger respectively of those excluded.

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Contents

Abbreviations

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts
APOT	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament
DJG	Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels
DNTT	Dictionary of New Testament Theology
EDNT	Expository Dictionary of the New Testament
IBD	Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
IDB	Imperial Bible Dictionary
KJV	King James Version of the Bible
NA	The Nestle-Aland critical text of the New Testament (27^{th} edition)
OTP	Old Testament Pseudepigrapha
RSV	Revised Standard Version of the Bible
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
UBS	United Bible Societies critical text of the New Testament

No part of this thesis has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or in any other University. Material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases suitably indicated.

Introduction

Background to the Problem

The eschatological punishment of the wicked – or "hell"[1] as it came to be called – has held a strange fascination among Christians. It is a topic anchored in the Christian Scriptures. The first centuries AD witnessed a divergence of opinion among Christians concerning what exactly hell constituted and, more importantly, how long it would last. Only after the Second Council of Constantinople in AD 543 did the belief in hell as a real place in which unrepentant sinners will suffer forever become part of traditional theology.[2] It also spread beyond theological discourse into popular circles; thus a whole body of literature sprang up with vivid descriptions of the different torments in hell that the writers claimed to have seen in visions. Hence the description of these divergent works in a monograph by Martha Himmelfarb: *Tours of Hell*.[3] During the medieval period interest in hell seems to have been all pervasive. It was epitomised in works like Dante's *Inferno*,[4] which could not fail to create terror among those who shared his eschatological expectations. The influence of such writings spilled over into art as the many anonymous mosaics and decorative paintings from around Europe indicate. It touched even such great painters as Michelangelo, Bouts, Signorelli and Blake, as a large number of their sometimes horrifically descriptive paintings testify.[5]

The near uniformity of belief in an everlasting hell began to crumble in the 17th century, when notable preachers like Peter Sterry and Jeremiah White argued in favour of universal salvation for sinners and saints alike[6] – a belief that came to be known as "universalism". This teaching gathered momentum in the 19th century

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[1] "Hell" derives from the Saxon "Helam" "to cover" and denotes an "unseen" place. Initially used primarily of the place of the dead, it eventually came to denote the eschatological place of punishment (Fairbairn, IBD, 3:54). In the KJV it renders both Hades and Gehenna.

[2] Dalton, 73.

[3] Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell*, discusses the nature and origin of these works.

[4] For an English translation of the *Inferno* see, *A Vision of Hell*, trans. by Tomlinson..

[5] Some examples are, *A Damned Woman Carried Off by a Devil*, by Signorelli in the Ovieto Cathedral; "Christ Cursing the Lost", a detail from *The Last Judgement* by Michaelangelo in the Sistine Chapel; Blake's *Lost* in the Rosenwal Collection in the Library of Congress; and Dieric Bouts' *Descent into Hell* now in the Art Museum in Lille. Also *The Ladder of Salvation* dating (c. 1190) in the Chaldon Church, *Two Devils Roasting A Soul over Hell-Fire* (c. 1520) in the Worcester Cathedral or *The Last Judgement* (c. 1390) in the Bourges Cathedral to name only a few among many.

[6] For an excellent treatment on the decline of the traditional view of hell in the 17th century, see Walker, *The Decline of Hell*.

when it was adopted by renowned theologians like E. H. Plumptre[7] and A. Dorner.[8][9] They were followed in the 20th century by individuals like Karl Barth,[10] R. Niebuhr[11] and Paul Tillich[12]. "Universalism" continues to be popular among more liberal Protestant circles and has lately even won support from among generally traditionalist Catholics.[13]

The 19th century also witnessed another development: a tendency to view the last judgement as an act of God that will result in the end of sinners rather than their everlasting suffering. This view, frequently designated "conditionalism",[14] was not new; indeed some early patristic writers maintained the same[15] as well as individuals like John Wyclife and William Tyndale.[16] However, it re-emerged with force in the 19th century and has since been gaining influence. Some landmark works were M. Constable's *The Duration and Nature of Future Punishment* (1886),[17] and especially Leroy Froom's massive work, *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers* (1956).[18] Froom in turn influenced Oxford scholar John W. Wenham who in turn published his views in a treatise entitled, *The Goodness of God* (1974).[19] "Conditionalism" has come more fully to the foreground since the evangelical writer John Stott (1988)[20] espoused this view stimulating a lively debate. Among the most recent works are Edward Fudge's *The Fire that Consumes* (1982),[21] and David Powys' *Hell: A Hard Look at a Hard Question*(1997).[22]

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[7] Plumptre, *The Spirits in Prison.*
[8] Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre.*
[9] "Universalism" holds that eventually all sinners will be saved, perhaps even Satan and his angels. It does not exclude the possibility of hellfire or divine condemnation but regards its purpose as redemptive, not punitive. For recent studies on "Universalism" see Bauckham, "Universalism", Powys, "The Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Debates about Hell and Universalism," in Cameron (ed.) *Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell*, 93-138.
[10] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III:2 602-4,587-640; IV:1 8-12,20-25,306,356,550; IV:2 270,296,314,509.
[11] Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man.*
[12] Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3:407-418.
[13] For a brief discussion on individual contributions to the discussion of hell and a Catholic response, see Dalton, 75-83.
[14] A variation of "Conditionalism" envisages the extinction of sinners at death without a prospect of a future resurrection, but this view has never gained much popularity.
[15] E.g. Justin Martyr, *Sec. Apol.* 7; *Dial.* 5. Also Tatian, *Addr.* 6; Irenaeus, *Her.* 4:39.
[16] Wyclif, *Select English Writings*, 1:339; 2:101. Tyndale, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, 1:2; 3:262,267,268.
[17] See bibliography below.
[18] See bibliography below.
[19] See bibliography below.
[20] Stott and Edwards, *Essentials: A Liberal-Evangelical Dialogue.*
[21] See bibliography below.
[22] See bibliography below.

Against Universalists and Conditionalists traditional Catholics and the majority of conservative Protestants have maintained a commitment to the notion of an everlasting suffering – the so-called "Traditionalist" view. Landmark works from this perspective have been R. Landis' *The Immortality of the Soul and the Final Condition of the Wicked* (1859),[23] and W.G. Shed's *The Doctrine of Everlasting Punishment* (1887).[24] H. Buis, in his book *The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment* (1957),[25] challenged "Universalism" from a Traditionalist perspective, while more recently hell has been the main theme of the evangelical apologist A. Morey in *Death and the Afterlife* (1984)[26]and David Pawson's *The Road to Hell* (1996)[27] while Anthony Hoekema also deals extensively with this topic in *The Bible and the Future*.[28]

As the above works indicate, the recent interest in the topic of hell has been intense. There have been at least two attempts to introduce balance into the debate by comparing the strong and weak points of the different sides. This has been the purpose of the Evangelical Alliance Commission for Unity and Truth among Evangelicals (ACUTE), which published the book *The Nature of Hell* (2000) where the different aspects of the current debate are discussed,[29] and of William V. Crockett (editor) in *Four Views on Hell* (1996).[30]

One of the limitations of most works mentioned above is their breadth of scope. The relevant source material from antiquity, whether biblical or extra-canonical (contemporary Jewish and early Christian), is abundant and wide ranging. Furthermore, the question of the final destiny of unrepentant sinners touches on other important philosophical and theological issues, especially the questions of human nature and the character of God. It is a natural consequence that any attempt to write a comprehensive analysis of hell from such different angles will either end up with massive amounts of information, or, more commonly, a lack of in-depth treatment of the relevant issues and sources.

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[23] See bibliography below.
[24] See bibliography below.
[25] See bibliography below.
[26] See bibliography below.
[27] See bibliography below.
[28] See bibliography below.
[29] See bibliography below.
[30] See bibliography below.

A case in point is the most voluminous, and perhaps one of the best informed works to have appeared from a Conditionalist viewpoint: Froom's two-volume, *The Conditionalist Faith of our Fathers.* Froom attempted to cover the most relevant material from the Old and New Testaments, while also discussing developments in Jewish thought during the Hellenistic and Roman periods as reflected in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, other Jewish literature, and the writings of the early church Fathers. The amount of information contained in his study is impressive, and Froom has managed to deal in some depth with some of the more controversial texts, like, for example, the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus to which he allocates a total of thirty-six pages (234-269) handling adequately the issues of background and literary relationships. However, on the topic of "Gehenna," the term most frequently used in the Synoptics in relation to punishment, he offers only three pages (292-294). In such a limited analysis it is not possible to address fully issues like the origin of the term, the purpose behind its use, or the impact it was intended to have. These observations do not detract from or undermine Froom's work, but rather point out that such a broad work cannot by implication, deal with all the issues effectively and in depth.

Another problem with most contributions to the discussion is their apologetic nature. Apologetics can at times lead to a one-sided approach and unsupported conclusions, or even to a blatant manipulation of the evidence. An example of the dangers of such an approach is Morey's discussion of the verb ἀπόλλυμι, a verb used repeatedly in the gospels in relation to eschatological punishment.[31] The verb is usually translated "to destroy" and as such has been used by Conditionalists as proof that the final judgement will destroy sin and sinners rather than prolong their existence in never-ending agony. In reply, Morey asserts that ἀπόλλυμι cannot imply annihilation even though in the vast majority of instances in the New Testament it denotes the removal of life. In support of his assertion he refers woodenly to lexicons, which list different shades of meaning for the verb, and leaves it at that. However, the issue at hand is not what different shades of meaning ἀπόλλυμι can have but rather what meaning it has in the instances it is used in relation to eschatological punishment. Mere appeal to lexicons is not a suitable substitute for

[31] Morey, 90.

detailed exegesis. In such a simplistic way Morey attempts to brush aside possible repercussions of the repeated use of the verb.

Finally, apologetic works often take an either-or approach, namely, either the Traditionalist view of eternal torment, the Conditionalist view of the destruction of sin and sinners, or the Universalist view of salvation. It is true that despite differences of emphasis in the Synoptic gospels there is an overriding coherence in the way they handle the issue of the punishment of the wicked. Nonetheless, the evidence is at times open to different interpretations. More importantly, it is now recognised that within the broader context of the Jewish milieu within which the New Testament documents were written there was a proliferation of divergent views on both the nature of afterlife in general and the fate of the wicked in particular; this evidence is conceptually much broader than an either-or approach would indicate. This complexity cannot be ignored and needs to be taken into consideration when a discussion of New Testament texts is attempted. One cannot merely use modern and contemporary doctrinal questions as spectacles through which to examine ancient texts, for the writers of which systematic doctrinal instruction was not necessarily a primary concern.

Since the majority of works on the topic of the final fate of the wicked are broad in context, apologetic in nature, and overly categorical in their conclusions, much work remains to be done. The topic needs to become more detached from the apologetic approach and to be studied from a historical perspective.[32] Approaching the material from a historical critical viewpoint does not of course guarantee that a study can be free of biases. Every writer has his/her own preconceptions on a given topic and these without doubt influence the way historical data and tools are handled. Nonetheless, a historical approach tends to pay closer attention to the historical context and as such can better inform on the meaning of ancient texts. Approaching the issue from a historical perspective means that each relevant text or group of texts should be studied in its context and against the background in which it appears. Questions like "what did this text mean to its original audience?" or "why did a particular writer chose to employ such language to describe the fate of the wicked?"

[32] Several recent articles and/or short works bring this approach to individual texts. Good examples are Powy's analysis of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (*Hell*, 352-58) or Bauckham's excellent article "Parallels," on the same topic. See also Milikowsky's article "Gehenna", (238-249, on the relationship between the Q Mt. 10:28 and Lk. 12:4-5), or Bailey, "Topography" (184-92). Despite such and other similar articles or essays, there has been no monograph that tackles the different Synoptic texts relevant to hell.

have to be addressed. By exploring these questions we hope to gain a glimpse into the ancient writers' approaches to this topic. It is therefore necessary to concentrate on smaller literary units – more like trying to understand the approach of Matthew, or Luke, or Daniel, or Paul, or Revelation- than to attempt to deal with the entire Bible and beyond. While such an approach cannot come up with comprehensive and all encompassing conclusions on the topic as attempted in previous apologetic/doctrinal works, it may open up a clearer understanding of the issues involved, at least as far as the ancient texts are concerned. These considerations have led to the form adopted in this thesis.

A historical study of the nature of hell in the gospels is not merely valuable as an attempt to inform contemporary debate; it can enrich the field of New Testament studies in its own right. There has been some recent discussion concerning the extent to which the historical Jesus took an interest in eschatology. One the one hand scholars like Jean Dominique Crossan have maintained that Jesus was essentially a "wisdom" teacher who took little interest in eschatology.[33] In such a case, the eschatological discourses in the gospels come not from Jesus but the early church. On the other hand, other recent writers do find a strong eschatological interest in the teaching of the historical Jesus.[34] However, irrespective of how the historical Jesus is understood today, it is beyond dispute that the early church *did* take an interest in eschatology. The evidence for this is abundant: Revelation; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36; Matthew 24:1-25:46; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1:12 to name a few. In early Christian eschatology the fate of the wicked occupied an important role especially in Matthew and Revelation. The abundance of such texts and their sometimes ambiguous language and imagery have helped fuel the ongoing debate about the nature of hell discussed above. Clearly therefore any attempt to study either the eschatology of the early church or, more specifically, the fate of the wicked as variously expressed throughout the New Testament is both a legitimate and a necessary exercise: legitimate, because it may offer an insight into the thinking of the early church, and necessary because eschatology in its different facets played such a prominent role in its theology.

Surprisingly, there is a large gap in the scholarly biblical contribution to this area. Naturally, many introductions to New Testament theology discuss to some

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[33] Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (1993).
[34] E.g. Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (1999).

extent the questions of eschatology and the fate of the wicked[35] as do dictionaries and encyclopedias. Yet, any such discussions are limited in at least two respects.

First, they are brief by nature – these works are after all only introductory. A good example is G. E. Ladd's (1993) treatment of the subject. Ladd offers a total of seventy-two pages on all issues of eschatology.[36] Yet the broad range of topics he includes under "eschatology" results in a discussion of hell in the Synoptics that occupies barely two paragraphs.[37] He discusses briefly the background to the term Gehenna but provides no detail regarding variations of emphasis among the three Synoptic gospels. Likewise, his conclusion that Gehenna is a "place of eternal torment" is not based on any apparent exegetical support from the relevant texts, but appears rather to reflect a personal conviction.[38]

Second, the attempt to provide a New Testament theology of the fate of the wicked means by implication that the importance of individual texts recedes in favour of more general and sometimes overly synthetic observations. An example is G.B. Caird's (1996) discussion of death and eternity.[39] He claims that the New Testament as a whole supports the notion of a future life that begins immediately at death. He supports this by appealing to the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 as well as to the souls John sees under the altar in Revelation 6:9-11. Using, of course, Luke 16:19-31 to establish a New Testament understanding of death, is problematic since the description of afterlife there and its view of Hades are without parallel in the rest of the New Testament. Beyond this, however, Luke 16:19-31 envisages both the rich man and Lazarus as having a corporeal existence, partaking or wishing to partake of physical water, and conversing as they probably could have done when they were alive. In Revelation John sees "souls" (whatever ψυχὰς may mean here) who are not enjoying heavenly bliss so much as requesting in distress that God avenge the blood of the martyrs. They are told to be patient. While Luke 16:19-

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[35] E.g. Guthrie's *Theology*, Caird's *Theology*, (267-78).
[36] Ladd, 193-212, 334-46, 379-96, 595-616.
[37] Ladd, 196. Others overlook the topic with only a passing mention: see e.g. Morris, *Theology*, 27-29, 118-9, 283-5; Schmithals, 30, 268, 303; Kümmel, *Theology*, 39-40, 56-8, 231-2. Strecker sees only the positive side (e.g. 115, 132, 142, 285, 286).
[38] Schweizer, *Introduction*, 32, 135, offers but a couple of sentences on the topic of judgement though he admits its presence especially in the gospel of Matthew (135). See also Johnson, *Writings*, 155, 197, 205, 207, 221, 232 for a fragmented treatment of the issue of hell in the Synoptics without reference to the varied terminology and motifs used.
[39] Caird, *Theology*, 271-3.

31 is a parable, or example story,[40] Revelation 6:9-11 occurs in apocalyptic vision. To reach a conclusion about an immediate afterlife on the basis of subject matter that differs so extensively in content, literary context and genre cannot but result in an *artificial* conclusion.[41]

Works dedicated solely to matters of eschatology fare slightly better in that they focus on a narrower field of study. In this respect a number of good studies have appeared.[42] Even here, however, a broad range of issues are discussed under the heading "eschatology", and the fate of the wicked again fails to receive due attention. Furthermore, space limits do not allow proper development of concepts. Hoekema (1979), for example, assumes that αἰώνιος almost always denotes time without end and bases his conclusion primarily on lexical evidence with little reference to variations in nuance the word may have in different contexts.[43] As such, he disregards the LXX usage where the adjective is used in purely temporal contexts, or possible theological developments about the age to come that might have influenced the meaning of the word.[44] The problem becomes evident when he attempts to interpret the ὄλεθρος αἰώνιος of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Having assumed that αἰώνιος can only denote time without end, he then concludes that ὄλεθρος cannot mean "destruction" since there cannot be such a thing as destruction that continues forever. He thus begins with an assumption that cannot really be substantiated and uses it as a measure to interpret other relevant texts.

Then there are the commentaries, which contain a number of insightful analyses and comments on the pertinent texts. I will not single out any here, as many of these are discussed in the main body of this study. The problem with commentaries, hoever, is the reverse of that of introductions or dictionary entries: they focus on individual texts often without bringing together all the relevant material that might contribute to an overall picture. Even in cases where such a synthesis is attempted, there is usually inadequate analysis of other relevant texts. For example, Davies and Allison (1988), who offer three paragraphs on the discussion of Gehenna

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[40] See discussion in Chapter X on the genre of Lk. 16:19-31.

[41] See also Ladd, 193, who considers both the fire of Gehenna and the outer darkness as descriptions of hell. Since the two cannot co-exist, he concludes that they must be *metaphorical* descriptions, and thus, in fact, divests both motifs of their context and their intended impact.

[42] A few examples are Tiede *Jesus and the Future*; Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*; Hiers (ed), *The Historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God*; Ellis, "Hell" and Head, "Judgment" in *Eschatology in Bible and Theology*.

[43] Hoekema, 270-2.

[44] See discussion in Chapter III.

in Matthew 5:22 and provide a plethora of references to Jewish writings as well as an overview on the growth of the tradition as they understand it, fail to relate their findings to the other Synoptic or even Matthean Gehenna texts. Nor do they broach the question about an underlying Synoptic view of Gehenna.[45] This is not an individual failing but rather a reflection of the nature of commentaries. No matter how helpful or insightful they may be they remain a genre that harbours broader concerns and that by definition cannot be expected to concentrate on individual concepts in great depth.

Apart from works that fall in the above categories there is very little available on the topic of hell from a historical perspective. I would single out the a few articles like C. Milikowsky's "Which Gehenna?"[46] (1988) that discusses two Q texts (Mt. 10:28 and Lk. 12. 4, 5) and attempts to explain their differences in the light of near contemporary rabbinic sayings; L. R. Bailey's article (1976) on the archaeological context of Gehenna;[47] Montgomery's discussion (1908) on the growth of the Gehenna tradition;[48] Scharen's discussion of Gehenna (1992);[49] and the numerous articles on the literary background of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.[50] Two other works should be mentioned. First, there is David Powys' study on hell in the New Testament (1998).[51] While the subtitle *The Fate of the Unrighteous in New Testament Thought* correctly suggests some overlap with the material in this study, Powys has adopted a decidedly different approach. Rather than study individual texts in their own right, he prefers to concentrate on general ideas, such as "judgement" as it emerged from the traditions of the Hebrew scriptures. Powys only looks at New Testament texts to see if they fit within his developing pattern. As such, even though he offers insightful comments on difficult texts like the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, his approach fails to explore individual texts in their own right. Secondly, there is Briscombe's book entitled *Hades, Heaven and Gehenna* (1890), which bears a close similarity to the theme of the present work.[52] However, it was published in 1890 and New Testament scholarship has since progressed considerably.

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[45] Davies and Allison, 1:514. Cf. Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:127; Gundry, *Matthew*, 85; Beare, 148-9.
[46] Milikowsky, 238-49.
[47] Bailey, 184-92.
[48] Montgomery, 24-47.
[49] Scharen, 324-337.
[50] See Bauckham "Parallels" (1991), which comments on previous contributions and nicely brings the discussion up to date with original and insightful comments.
[51] Powys, *Hell.*
[52] Briscombe, *Hades, Heaven and Gehenna.*

Among scholarly discussions (however brief they might be) of hell in New Testament circles, three main pertinent tendencies may be noted. First, there has been a tendency to conflate the different terms used in the New Testament in general and the Synoptics in particular in relation to judgement. Thus, Lenski (1946), commenting on the Abyss of Luke 8:31, remarked casually that: "What is meant by the 'Abyss' into which the demons dread to be ordered is... the burning pit of hell which was prepared especially for the evil angels".[53] The tendency has been even more prominent in the use of the designations "Hades" and "Gehenna".[54] This was probably due in part to the fact that the English "hell" has been used to translate a number of different terms,[55] and perhaps also to the dominance of the Traditionalist view outlined above, which, on the basis of the belief in the innate immortality of the soul, assumed that the eschatological sufferings of hell begin at death.

The conflation of terms has not disappeared altogether. Lunde, for example, writes that there is "no explicit distinction... between Hades and Gehenna" and also considers the Abyss and "darkness" as also denoting the same place.[56] Böcher (1990) locates Gehenna in Hades, which in turn he places in the Abyss.[57] Boyd (1978), takes a strong stand in favor of associating Hades with Gehenna and writes: "it is precisely in Matthew and Luke where both Hades and Gehenna occur that the distinction between them is least obvious"; and again: "the similarity between the two terms is far greater than their differences in the Gospels".[58]

Nonetheless, recent New Testament scholarship has become more aware of the differing nuances underlying the different terms. It is now generally recognised that, at least within their use in the New Testament, Hades mostly refers to the place of the dead[59] while Gehenna relates to the punishment of the day of judgement.[60] Scharen thus writes: "In the Synoptics Gehenna refers to the final, irreversible, eschatological judgement."[61] The picture is not as clear with other terms like the

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[53] Lenski, *Luke*, 473.
[54] E.g. Brown, 295: "[Hades] comes... to much the same thing [as hell]" given in the discussion below.
[55] See for example the KJV or RSV renderings of: Mt. 5:22; 10:28; Mk. 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:4.
[56] Lunde, 311.
[57] Böcher, Γέεννα, 240. See also Nolland, 678, who allows that perhaps Gehenna refers to post-mortem judgement and is as such, parallel to Hades (so also, Milikowsky, 238-249; C.F. Evans, 515).
[58] Boyd, 11-12.
[59] With the possible exception of Lk. 16:19-31 (and perhaps Lk. 10:15), though see my comments in chapter X.
[60] E.g. C.A. Evans, *Mark*, 72; Luz, *Matthew*, 282.
[61] Scharen, 470.

Abyss or Tartarus with opinions divided as to what exactly they represent.[62] The reason why the tendency to conflate persists is because even if it is conceded that within the New Testament there is some coherence in the use of terms, their use in non-canonical early Jewish writings is more varied and attached to different concepts.[63] The clearer appreciation of the different nuances of terms in more recent scholarship has helped make discussion more focused and conclusions more contextually informed.

A second trend has been the growing attempt to relate and understand New Testament texts vis-à-vis contemporary non-biblical literature. This attempt has, of course, been with us ever since the birth of historical critical approaches to the biblical text. Nonetheless, the growth of the study of early Jewish literature and the growing bibliography of both primary and secondary sources on it that have appeared since the mid-twentieth century, have meant that commentators are now much better resourced to relate biblical writings to the Jewish background. This has substantially informed the understanding of terms related to eschatological punishment in a positive way, though not without pitfalls.

An example of the positive influence is the study on the Abyss. If studied within the context of biblical tradition, and if – accordingly – New Testament references are interpreted purely in light of Old Testament (LXX) usage, then the resulting conclusion could be that the Abyss is not a place name as such, but simply a descriptive noun applied to large bodies of water without stronger connotations; that is, an abyss rather than the Abyss. A study of its use in early Jewish writings (especially the Enoch literature), however, reveals that it came to be closely associated with punishment, especially of fallen heavenly beings and eventually became a place name.[64] In this respect, New Testament references are closer to non-scriptural usage, something commentators have been quick to recognise.[65]

On a more cautionary note, the growth of the study of early Jewish literature means that at times terms used in the New Testament are understood in accordance with use in the non-biblical literature even if direct influence and literary relationships

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[62] See, Bietenhard, ἄβυσσος, 205; Gnilka, 1:205; compare with Jeremias, ἄβυσσος, 9, though they are mostly associated with fallen heavenly beings. Mounce, 225, thus calls it, "the haunt of demons".
[63] See individual discussions in the chapters on the background in this thesis for relevant texts.
[64] SE 1 En. 54:5; AA 1 En. 88:1-3; 90:24-27; Jub. 10:7.
[65] E.g. Bietenhard, ἄβυσσος, 205; Aune, 610-13; C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 387; Böcher, ἄβυσσος, 4; Fitzmyer, 738-39; Marshall, *Luke*, 339.

are difficult to establish. A clear example is the term Gehenna. A number of commentators take for granted that the use of Gehenna is coloured by what they believe to have been popular Jewish usage.[66] For example, Davies and Allison (1988) state that "Gehenna is, in the New Testament, the place where the wicked dead suffer fiery torments... either immediately after death or after the last judgement" and give a host of Jewish references.[67] However, they refer to only one Synoptic and two other New Testament texts, none of which actually mentions the term.[68]

In fact, as Nolland (1993) has pointed out, "there are no known Jewish uses of the term that definitely pre-date the Gospel uses".[69] This, of course, does not mean that the term was unknown before the gospels took shape (though see my comments in chapter I). However, this does mean that many if not most of the non-biblical Jewish references are at times considerably late and do not, therefore, have a direct bearing on the use of Gehenna in the Synoptic gospels. An approach that interprets the Synoptic Gehenna in light of later Jewish usage may invest it with meanings that are not there. The possible influence of Jewish sources needs itself to be approached critically and any final conclusions of every exegetical exercise must first and foremost be shaped by the immediate context in which a text appears.

A final trend in scholarship that I would like to briefly discuss takes us back to the opening of this introduction, namely to views on the nature and duration of punishment in hell. Every commentator is an individual whose theological preconceptions shape the way a text is understood and vice versa; the present writer not excluded. As such, doctrinal and theological implications usually loom in the background of most discussions on the biblical text and the same is the case with texts on hell.

The majority of commentators are of the opinion that the "hell" texts of the Synoptic gospels envision the everlasting torment of unrepentant sinners, not least because the Traditionalist view is the still the predominant one in most Christian circles. Hagner (1993), for example, writes that "the constant burning there [i.e. in the literal valley of Hinnom that some believe was a rubbish dumb with fires burning to consume the rubbish (but see my comments in chapter I)] made the valley a

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[66] C.A. Evans, *Mark*, 72; Luz, *Matthew*, 282; Hagner, 117; Morris, *Matthew*, 523.
[67] BW 1 En. 27:2-3; SE 1 En. 54:1; AA 1 En. 90:24; 2 Bar. 85:13; 4 Ez. 7:36; 2 Bar. 59:10; Sib. Or. 1:103; 2:292; 4:186; *t. Sanh.* 13.3; *b. Ber.* 28b; *b. Pes.* 54a.
[68] Mt. 25:41.
[69] Nolland, 678.

particularly suitable metaphor for eternal punishment".[70] Davies and Allison (1988) admit that in Jewish thought there were divergent and conflicting views about the duration of punishment, with some believing in the eventual annihilation of the wicked and others in everlasting torment.[71] They choose the latter option as their concluding remark in the discussion states: "the wicked will be ever dying, never dead".[72]

Others, however, are more cautious. C. A. Evans (1998), in his discussion of Gehenna in Mark 9:48, prefers not to tackle the issue of the duration of the punishment envisaged.[73] Luz (1990), very pointedly, enriches his discussion on Matthew 10:28 with a brief overview of how the text has been used (or rather, misused in his view), in support of the notion of the immortality of the soul and everlasting torment. The mention of "soul" has been understood to imply innate immortality though the text does not require it, while the statement that the soul can be killed has been brushed aside as either possible for God but not to happen, or as a metaphor for the torments of hell.[74] Luz prefers to stand back from drawing conclusive decisions on the issue.[75] C. F. Evans (1990), commenting on Luke 12:4-5 (Luke's version of the Q passage also behind Matthew 10:28), finds contradicting views in Matthew and Luke. Matthew 10:28, he maintains, compares human ability to kill the body as opposed to "God's capacity to *annihilate* both in Hades" (emphasis mine).[76] He argues that Luke's avoidance of the word "soul" may have been "a desire to avoid the idea of killing the soul" though he stops short of stating that for Luke the soul is innately immortal.[77]

The variety of approaches and conclusions is constructive. It means that texts can be approached from different angles, the bearing of the historical context can be examined and applied more critically and greater insight can be gained into the

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[70] Hagner, 117. Of course, the exact opposite could be argued on grounds that since the rubbish was consumed, the sinners will likewise be consumed.
[71] Davies and Allison, 1:515. They cite *t. Sanh.* 13.3; *b. Ros. Has.* 17a; *m. Ed.* 2.9-10 where the suffering lasts only a few months; and they cite Dan. 12:2; 1QS 2:8; *t. Sanh.* 13.3; *t. Ber.* 6:7; and Is. 66:24 in support of everlasting torment, though the two biblical references do not reflect such an idea.
[72] Davies and Allison, 1:515. Interestingly, though, in their comments on Mt. 10:28 (2:205-7) they admit that the annihilation of the person is in view.
[73] C.A. Evans, *Mark*, 72.
[74] Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:127.
[75] Cf. his similar approach on Mt. 5:22 (Luz, *Matthew*, 282). Cf. Schweizer's comments (*Matthew*, 248) on Mt. 10:28.
[76] C.F. Evans, 515. Cf. Barclay, *Matthew*, 387: the soul of the sinner "is obliterated, extinguished and annihilated, and ceases to be".
[77] C.F. Evans, 515.

possible implications of words, meanings and syntax, thus improving our overall understanding of and knowledge about the faith of the early Christians. Without wanting to pre-empt my conclusions (they will become evident progressively in the ensuing chapters), I am confident that the value of the present study lies mostly in areas where it can offer fresh approaches and new insights to often studied texts; where it can challenge without overstepping the boundaries of what constitutes sound and legitimate historical research.

Two things stand out from the above overview of studies on hell. First, a plethora or works are apologetic in nature and attempt to defend given doctrinal positions and cover the topic in broad sweeps of the pen with all the limitations such approaches entail as discussed above. Secondly, New Testament scholarship has taken surprisingly little interest in the topic apart from passing comments or brief discussions in articles, commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias or New Testament introductions and theologies. Perhaps the reason for this is in part because of the topic's strong doctrinal overtones and the extent of the debate. However, the fact that early Christians understood themselves within the context of eschatological expectations means that their views concerning the fate of the wicked calls for further and more precise study.

Focus of the Present Study

This study hopes to help fill this vacuum in New Testament research by comprehensively considering aspects of punishment in the gospels. I have chosen to limit my study to language about places of eschatological punishment in the Synoptic gospels and have singled out four, as below. I have chosen the Synoptic gospels for three reasons. First, the gospels, though authored and edited later than the Pauline literature, claim to preserve elements from the teaching of Jesus. In addition, they reflect instruction in the early Christian communities. As such they played a central role in the development of Christian theologies of punishment; any study of the topic would do well to give this corpus its due place. Second, as indicated already, there is a wealth of relevant texts particularly in the gospel of Matthew (see chapters below), something also true of Revelation,[78] and to a lesser extent Paul's epistles[79] or John's gospel. Third, the fact that Matthew, Mark and Luke at times share similar traditions

[78] E.g. Rev. 14:17-20; 17:16; 18:8,21-24; 19:11-21; 20:7-10,11-15; 21:1; 22:10-15.
[79] E.g. 1 Cor. 15:52-55; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:8-12.

means that an examination of a tradition and its parallels in the Synoptics may yield insight as to how the different evangelists viewed, adjusted or even possibly reshaped the traditions they received.

The purpose here for the focus on places of punishment in the Synoptics is that these are each associated with different aspects of the afterlife. Each of the four locales identified forms one part of this study.

Rationale and Method

Part I deals with Gehenna, perhaps the most prominent locale in the gospels relating to eschatological punishment. My approach is first to look at the relevant background literature, the Old Testament (both the Hebrew and Greek traditions), the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Philo and Josephus, and some early rabbinic traditions from the Talmud. By looking at the relevant texts we are in a better position to see whether a developing tradition associated the Old Testament Ge-hinnom, the name of a valley outside Jerusalem, with eschatological punishment. The question of what are "relevant" texts is of course, not altogether obvious. The number of texts in which the term "Ge-hinnom", "Gehenna" or derivatives occur is relatively small.[80] However, in the Jewish milieu within which the Synoptics were written numerous overlapping and intertwined motifs of punishment appear. It is possible therefore that the Gehenna motif of the Synoptics draws not only from earlier Ge-hinnom/Gehenna traditions but also related contemporary ideas. This observation is itself a reason for caution against any attempt to simplistic conclusions from the outset.

Despite the possibility of such divergent influences, in my discussion of the background literature I have chosen to look primarily at the Ge-hinnom/Gehenna texts; the very choice of the term "Gehenna" in the Synoptics to define eschatological punishment suggests at least some deliberate attempt to connect with earlier texts that used this term. Therefore, it is best to begin with earlier Ge-hinnom/Gehenna texts. Indeed, there seems to be a close relation between the Synoptic Gehenna and prophetic oracles about the valley of Hinnom, Ge-hinnom. At the same time, I shall discuss other possible influences in the discussion of the specific Synoptic texts.

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[80] Mk. 9:43-48; Mt. 5:22-23,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Lk. 12:4-5.

Once the background is discussed, the remaining chapters of Part I are dedicated to an exegetical discussion of key Synoptic passages in order to determine early Christian expectations concerning the fate of the ungodly. The texts are treated in source critical sequence beginning with the Markan material, then Q, and finally M. The Markan material proves particularly useful since it is more descriptive that either Q or M and helps establish a link with earlier Ge-hinnom traditions. The Q texts present an interesting study on how Matthew and Luke handle differently a specific punishment tradition.

Part II concentrates on Hades. Again the background is first discussed followed by an exegetical discussion of the relevant Synoptic texts. Hades is not as obscure as Gehenna. Rather it was the common pagan Greek term either for the place of the dead or for the physical grave. Perhaps more relevant is the use of the term in early Jewish writings of which prominence is given to the LXX and other Jewish works. The synoptic texts seem to follow the usage evident in the LXX, except for Luke 16:19-31 which departs not only from the LXX use, but also contains motifs otherwise unknown in the New Testament. As such it is discussed at more length.

Part III centres on two lesser-known terms – the Abyss and Tartarus. Only the Abyss appears in the Synoptic gospels (Lk. 8:31) but Tartarus is also discussed primarily because there is a close thematic relationship between the two. The former is a noun denoting a big chasm, which by the turn of the era, was beginning to be used as a proper noun, as a place name of punishment. The latter is a proper name drawn from Greek mythology that in the Hellenistic and Roman periods was adopted by Jewish and Christian writers who used it in close association with the Abyss. The background of the two terms is first discussed followed by an exegetical analysis of the two relevant texts, Luke 8:31 for the Abyss and 2 Peter 2:4 for Tartarus.

Finally, in Part IV, I discuss the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth". At first this does not seem to refer to a locale. However, in every one of its occurrence[81] it is accompanied by ἐκεῖ ("there") which places the above two verbs in a geographical setting. Indeed, a close examination of the phrase's use in the Synoptics indicates that there is a locale in mind, though not perhaps in the same sense as Gehenna, Hades or Abyss/Tartarus. The motifs of "weeping" and of "gnashing of teeth" are well established in early Jewish literature, but the standard form in which

[81] Mt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28.

they appear in the Synoptics (denoting eschatological punishment) has no exact parallel in the earlier and contemporary literature. As such, the discussion of background literature that introduces this part of the study does not aim to find direct parallels but related expressions that might help unlock the meaning of the phrase in the Synoptics. This is followed, as in the previous parts, by an exegetical discussion of the Synoptic texts with a special emphasis on Matthew who shows particular preference for it.

Methodologically, the above brief description indicates that the approach of this study is to arrive at as historical an understanding of a text as possible, first by examining the background and then by analysing the vocabulary, syntax and motifs employed in a given text. As such different traditional methods of historical research are used. Text-critical observations enter the fray briefly in instances where variant readings can enlighten the understanding of a passage, as for example in Mark 9:48-50, or Matthew 5:22-23. Source criticism plays a more central role, as it becomes the point around which the texts are grouped and studied. I have followed the traditional approach that gives priority to Mark and admits the existence of Q, M and L. However, the conclusions are not strictly dependent on such a relationship for two reasons. First, Mark exerts little influence on Matthew and Luke with respect to eschatological punishment. The one probable instance of this is Mark's detailed reference to Gehenna in 9:43-48. Luke does not preserve a parallel to this passage. Matthew maintains the crux of Mark 9:43 and 45 without, however, Mark's reference to Isaiah 66:24 or the saying about the salt (Mk 9:44,48-50) both of which play a pivotal role in determining the function of Gehenna for Mark. As such, Markan priority is not instrumental in understanding Gehenna in Matthew and Luke. The same is even truer of Hades, Abyss/Tartarus, and the Weeping and Gnashing of teeth. Second, the relationship between Matthew and Luke in the Q texts under consideration is ambiguous. Sometimes, there is a close parallel, as in some of the parables; sometimes Matthew seems to preserve a more authentic reading (e.g. the healing of the centurion's servant) or vice versa e.g. Mt 10:28/Lk 12:4-5. At other times there is considerable divergence in the way traditions are preserved. This raises the question about the extent to which a common source underlies them. As such, the two-source hypothesis forms a basis for arranging the materials but is not the crucial factor in determining their function.

Redaction criticism addresses the variations with which the evangelists have handled similar eschatological traditions and establishes how they helped form the expectations of the early church. At times I shall consider whether a tradition likely goes back to Jesus, as in the case of Gehenna; this is done because the evidence suggests that the teaching of Jesus played a key role in the development of the Gehenna tradition. However, I am less concerned to determine what can or cannot be termed authentic than to study the material in the form it presently appears and to detect differences in emphasis among the evangelists.

Finally, this study, in its attempt to trace the development of concepts before and among the gospels, is essentially form-critical, combined with tradition-historical considerations that discuss the background of the different locales.

This study does discuss and draw conclusions about the implications of the synoptic evidence on modern dogmatics. I began this introduction with a brief overview of the controversy around hell. When early Christian writers began to collect the writings that now form the New Testament, their purpose was not to explain in a systematic way their views on different topics. As such, it is artificial to try to impose contemporary doctrinal questions on texts that were not immediately concerned with such matters. At the same time, since the Old and New Testaments form a base from which many Christians draw their faith, their witness does have a bearing on the controversy around hell and its nature. In this respect, the contemporary debate lurks in the background behind this study. The purpose is not to create a systematic view on hell but rather to determine what the motifs employed and language used suggest about the eschatological expectations of the early Christian community. Invariably, the conclusions about their expectations may have a bearing on the current debate.[82]

This study cannot conclude with an authoritative statement that "the early Christians believed this or that" as previous studies have tried to. Ultimately, this study purports to be but a step in a process of historical study that will help us grapple better with the issues involved and attain a more informed understanding of early Christian eschatological anticipation, and its implications for contemporary Christian thought.

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[82] Conditionalist and Traditionalist views will be discussed but not Universalist since the Synoptic texts do not seem to reflect such a position; Universalists usually draw their material mostly from Paul.

Part I - Gehenna

Chapter I

Background

"Gehenna" often appears in the Synoptic Gospels as the place where God will bring retribution upon sinners. Whatever its precise meaning there, it eventually became part of Christian eschatological parlance. In this chapter, I shall attempt to trace the development of the tradition from its earlier use in the Old Testament as a toponym, to its usage in New Testament and Jewish writings to the end of the first century. This chapter accordingly is divided into three sections. First, I shall offer a description of Gehenna in the Old Testament. Second, I will survey its appearance and function in other early Jewish writings. And third, drawing on both the biblical and early Jewish background, I will discuss the use of Gehenna in the New Testament. The punishment of the wicked is an important theme throughout this literature; it is thus only natural that a variety of motifs, often manifesting strong similarities, should have developed. As we travel through this variety of documents, when relevant, I will discuss related motifs. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that the ultimate purpose here is to discern how a tradition linking the specific toponym of Gehenna with eschatological punishment came into existence.

Old Testament

"Gehenna" derives from a geographical location. It refers to a valley outside Jerusalem variously designated in the Hebrew text as valley "of the sons of Hinnom," (2 Kgs 23:10), "of the son of Hinnom" (Jer. 19:2), or simply "of Hinnom" (Neh. 11:30) – גי־בני־הינם גי־בן־הינם and גי־הינם respectively. For the sake of simplicity I will use the term "Ge-hinnom" when referring to the Old Testament references and "Gehenna" for the tradition as we meet it in the New Testament. The valley was located south, south-west of Jerusalem, and it adjoined the Kidron valley which lay to the south, south-east of the city. It is usually associated with today's Wadi er-Rababi. The word Ge-hinnom occurs thirteen times in the Hebrew Bible. We may divide these references into three categories: (1) texts that mention Ge-hinnom as a purely geographical term; (2) texts that describe historical events that happened in the valley

and its environs and are invested with spiritual overtones, and (3) prophetic texts about a war in the valley in which God will punish the apostates of Judah. A fourth category of texts that do not mention Ge-hinnom but have a close relation in subject matter to category (3) will be discussed.

1) Ge-hinnom as a geographical reference

Five references to Ge-hinnom as a geographical location are shared in three verses – Joshua 15:8, 18:16 and Nehemiah 11:30. It is twice called "valley of the son of Hinnom" (Josh. 15:8 and 18:16) and three times "valley of Hinnom" (Josh. 15:8; 18:16; Neh. 11:30). Nehemiah is a late composition dated variously between 400-300 BC. Joshua is the earliest work. In the two texts in Joshua Ge-hinnom forms part of a long list of names that designate the borders of the tribe of Judah after the conquest. Similarly, in Nehemiah it designates one of the limits of the area that the Jews returning from Babylon settled. These references to Ge-hinnom are casual and bear no symbolic overtones.

Of some interest is the possibility that Ge-hinnom might have been used in ancient times as a burial ground. Archaeological evidence has demonstrated that this is the case in the Kidron valley.[83] At what point the Kidron began to be used for burials cannot be determined with certainty. M. Lehmann suggests this occurred from as early as the first temple period.[84] The valley of Ge-hinnom is an extension of Kidron and it is possible that part of it was also used for burials. Archaeology supports this suggestion. Tombs have been found in Ketef Hinnom, the slopes of the valley of Hinnom.[85] The LXX corroborates this and refers to the valley as πολυάνδριον,[86] which literally means "populous" but was a word often used as a designation for cemeteries.[87]

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[83] Sukenik, 23.
[84] Lehmann, 365.
[85] Bailey, 188.
[86] Jer. 19:2,6.
[87] Liddell and Scott, 1436. Also Jer. 31:40, a possible reference to "Ge-hinnom" which Symmachus renders χώρον τῶν τάφων ("place of the graves").

2) Ge-hinnom and the religious life of Judah

Ge-hinnom is at times used in association with the religious life of Judah. [88] During the later years of the monarchy prior to the Babylonian captivity the valley became the centre of idolatrous practises. 2 Chronicles 28:3 describes how king Ahaz offered incense, sacrificed his children in fire, and made idols to Baal in Ge-hinnom. In 2 Chronicles 33:6 king Manasseh likewise sacrificed his sons in fire there and was involved in many other idolatrous rites elsewhere. According to Jeremiah 32:35 the inhabitants of Judah are reminded of past events in the valley. The reason why Ge-hinnom was chosen for such acts of idolatry is not difficult to imagine. L. Bailey notes that in ancient religions it was often assumed that the location of an altar was an entrance to the realm of the deity and that it was thus common to build altars to chthonian deities in deep valleys.[89]

In 2 Kings 23:1-25 there is a description of Josiah's sweeping reforms. He defiled the topheth[90] in Ge-hinnom so no one could offer his children to Molech (24:14). His servants brought out all the vessels that had been made for the worship of Baal and burned them in the "fields of Kidron" right next to the valley of Hinnom (23:4). Josiah also scattered human bones in the places that been used for heathen worship (23:14). Corpses and the bones of the dead were considered unclean, and this act signified the defilement of the sites so that they would not be used again for any kind of idolatrous worship.[91] 2 Chronicles 34:1-7, describing the same reforms, adds that Josiah "burned the bones of the [dead heathen] priests on their altars" and thus cleansed "Judah and Jerusalem" (34:5). Similar things were done in the heathen worship sites of Israel (34:7).

S. Salmond has suggested that after the desecration by Josiah, the valley became an object of horror and a receptacle for refuse, bodies of animals, criminals and all sorts of other impurities.[92] It is believed that eventually it became a rubbish

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[88] I will use the term "Judah" to refer to the southern kingdom in the period of the first temple.

[89] Bailey, 184-92. Bailey cites Er. 19a; Is. 57:5-6 and ANET 107,l.40, and the above cited article by Lehmann, 366. Lehmann argues on a supposed linguistic connection between the names מלך and מות that the valleys of Kidron and Ge-hinnom where used in rites involving human sacrifice and ritual burial in honour of Mot, the god of the underworld. McKane, 832-835, considers the linguistic connection between Molech and Mot dubious.

[90] "Topheth" (תפת) etymologically probably means "heath", "fireplace" or "firealtar" but eventually became a toponym in Ge-hinnom; see McKane, 179, and Barrois, 673. Barrois explains that the Masoretes gave the vowels of בשת ("shame") to the consonants ת-פ-ת so we get "topheth".

[91] See Num. 19:10-19 for the belief that contact with a dead body or even the remains of it marked a person or object as "unclean".

[92] Salmond, 355.

dump where fires burned perpetually to consume the rubbish, thus giving rise to such images as Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:43-48.[93] There is little doubt that Josiah's acts left a deep impact on the populace of Jerusalem for some time, and may have influenced the language of Jeremiah (see below). However, as Bailey points out,[94] the lack of early literary references and the fact that there have been no archaeological discoveries verifying the existence of a fiery rubbish dump in Ge-hinnom suggests that such a dump most probably did not exist either after Josiah or during the time of Jesus.[95]

3) Ge-hinnom as a place of a future war and restitution

In addition to the above references there is the third category of texts. These portray Ge-hinnom as the place where God will destroy apostate Jews in a future battle. The first such text is Jeremiah 7:29-34.[96] Here God calls the prophet to cut his hair as a sign of mourning and warns of a coming judgement. The object of God's anger is Judah. The Lord is angry because the people of Judah have built idols even in the temple of God, have built high places in topheth, and have sacrificed children in Ge-hinnom (7:30-31).

The description of what would come is fearful. Jeremiah prophesies that the day would come when the valley would not anymore be called the "Valley of the Son of Hinnom" but "Valley of Slaughter"[97] because the dead would be so numerous that there would not be enough place to bury them (7:32). The bodies that would remain unburied would become food for the birds of prey and for the beasts of the land (7:33). It is not explicitly stated what causes the death of all these people, but the mention of "slaughter" would suggest a battle scene. The picture is one of utmost desolation.

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[93] The J.B. Phillips translation renders the Gehenna of Mark 9:43 as "rubbish heap".
[94] Bailey, 189.
[95] That it is unlikely that a rubbish dump existed in Ge-hinnom seems further verified by Lk. 12:4-5 which contrasts humans who can kill and then do nothing more with God who can kill and then cast into Gehenna. If indeed there was a fire burning in the literal valley of Ge-hinnom, the contrast loses its power – not only God, but humans can also cast into Gehenna. Cf. Josephus' apparent references to that valley discussed below.
[96] There are considerable differences between the Masoretic and the LXX text of Jeremiah, both in the content of the book and the order in which the material is arranged. However, in the passages under consideration the Hebrew and the Greek texts largely agree and in the instances where the LXX adds an interesting insight I will note it as we go along.
[97] LXX has φάραγξ τῶν ἀνῃρημένων.

Jeremiah 19:1-15 returns to this theme. The prophet cries against the abominations that had taken place in Ge-hinnom and proceeds to paint a similar picture as in 7:29-34, this time with more details. The prophecy is directed against the kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (19:3).[98] Again it is prophesied that the valley will one day be called the "Valley of Slaughter". Again the dead apostates will be so numerous that there will not be enough ground to bury them. Again those left unburied will become prey to the birds and the beasts. This time, however, Jeremiah specifically states that the apostates will fall by the sword (19:7) thus introducing an explicitly military element.[99] The prophecy now involves Jerusalem itself, which will become desolate (19:8).[100] Jeremiah adds force to his prophecy by taking an earthen vessel and breaking it before the leaders of Judah exclaiming: "Thus says the Lord of hosts: So will I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel" (19:11).

In Jeremiah 31:40 we almost certainly have a third reference to Ge-hinnom. While the name itself is absent, the prophet refers to the "valley of the dead bodies and the ashes"[101] located just outside Jerusalem near the Kidron brook. In contrast to the oracles of doom in Jeremiah 7 and 19, this reference forms part of a prophecy of

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[98] The LXX (B) in 19:2 names the valley of Hinnom to which Jeremiah was to summon the leaders of the people as πολυάνδριον υἱῶν τῶν τέκνων αὐτῶν. If πολυάνδριον is a reference to a burial ground, the implication might be that (a) the children that had been sacrificed there, were also buried there; (b) the valley was used as a burial ground apart from the sacrifices offered there; or (c) it reflects the prophetic oracle that follows, namely that the valley will become filled with dead bodies.

[99] The military element is enhanced in the LXX (B) where in 19:6 it reads σφάξω τήν βουλήν Ἰούδα καί τήν βουλήν Ἱερουσαλήμ ("I will slay the counsel of Judah and the counsel of Jerusalem"). Βουλή can be either a "counsel", or a ruling body a "council of elders" – so Liddell and Scott, 325. In this case the second is preferable since God will slay them – the rulers of Judah and Jerusalem.

[100] The LXX (B) uses the word ἀφανισμόν to render the Hebrew שמתי. Ἀφανισμός comes from ἀφανίζω and can mean to "destroy" or to "make disappear" – Liddell and Scot, 286. In this case it would carry the idea of "complete destruction".

[101] The Greek names the "valley of the dead bodies" as κοιλάδα τῶν φαγαρείμ (Theodotion), φαγασείμ, (Marchalianus) and φαγαρείν (Aquila) among others. This is a transliteration of the Hebrew פגרין which means "corpses". Thus ιω' has κοιλάδα τῶν πτωμάτων καὶ τῆς σποδιᾶς ("valley of the dead bodies and the ash"). Following the mention of this valley the Masoretic refers to a place called, השרמות which the LXX transliterates into ἀσαρημώθ. The etymology of the word is not clear. Gesenius, s.v. considered it a case of mistaken transcription suggesting the original would have read השדמות, which he rendered as "fields" or in this case, "fields cut up," or "fields overflowed". The Vulgata reads *regionem mortis* and Symmachus χώρον τῶν τάφων supposing a hypothetical original of שד־מות which is close to Gesenius' suggestion. Likewise, Lehmann, 361-371, draws a parallel with the Ugaritic for "fields of death" but the connection is not clear. Koehler and Baumgartner, 1655, connect it with the verb שרה ("foaming," "bubbling") but admit this connection is not certain. The "valley of the dead bodies" is a reference to Ge-hinnom and probably so is השרמות since it is located next to the Kidron (Jer. 31:40).

salvation (31:23-40).[102] God will receive the people of Israel and Judah back (31:27-34), Jerusalem will be rebuilt (31:38) and the "valley of the dead bodies and ashes" together with the rest of the land surrounding Jerusalem will become "sacred to the Lord" (31:40).

The *Sitz im Leben* of these three texts is not difficult to imagine. Ahaz and Manasseh reigned towards the closing years of the monarchy in Judah.[103] Manasseh's reign lasted several decades and ended less than fifty years before Nebuchadnezzar first came to Jerusalem. Josiah followed him very soon on the throne[104] after a two-year rule by Amon, Manasseh's son and Josiah's father (2 Kgs. 21:19,26). Josiah's reforms began on the twelfth year of his reign (2 Chron. 34:3). He reigned for thirty-one years and shortly after his death, Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians and the people of Judah were taken into exile. The prophet Jeremiah was a younger contemporary of Josiah.[105] The human sacrifices performed in Ge-hinnom by Ahaz and Manasseh, and Josiah's subsequent radical reforms must have made a deep impact on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and on young Jeremiah.

Given this background, it is possible to understand the impact that the imagery of a valley filled with dead people in Jeremiah's two Ge-hinnom prophecies (7:29-34; 19:1-15) would have had on the populace of Jerusalem. They had recently lived through the reforms and had seen the valley desecrated with the bones of dead people. It is therefore no wonder that Jeremiah calls Ge-hinnom "the valley of dead bodies" in his third, indirect Ge-hinnom prophecy, as noted above. The message would be simple and with a powerful impact: "repent, or you and your city will become as

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[102] Westermann, *Oracles*, 143-148, considers Jer. 31:23-40 to be a collection of oracles compiled after the exile. Unlike 31:31-34 which, he maintains, envisioned a restoration "beyond history", 31:38-40 take the form of *vaticinium ex eventu* – a "reflective reinforcement of the historical significance of the liberation from exile in Babylon cast in the form of a proclamation of salvation" (148). Westermann fails to see the strong juxtaposition between the vivid images of Ge-hinnom as a valley of death that פגרים paints, and the beautiful promise of the valley becoming "holy to the Lord" and part of Jerusalem. These call for (a) a *Sitz im Leben* within the lifetime of the generation that lived through Josiah's reforms; and (b) understanding the promise as a hope for the eschatological future rather than a historical reflection.

[103] Ahaz in 735-715 BC, Manasseh in 696-641 BC.

[104] Josiah reigned from 639 to 609 BC.

[105] It is possible that Jeremiah actually played a part in Josiah's reforms. The chronology would certainly seem to suggest this. According to Jeremiah 1:6-7, the prophet received his prophetic call during Josiah's 13th year, just as the latter had commenced his reform program. Jeremiah was quite young at the time of his call, which could mean that Josiah's desecrations of Ge-hinnom would have been deeply impressed upon the young prophet. For a discussion of the chronology of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry, and the different evaluations of the available data, see Dillard and Longman, 288-9.

deserted, desecrated and abominable as the valley of Hinnom after the reforms of Josiah."

It might be objected that the book that bears the prophet's name may not have actually been written by him. That it was not was almost taken for granted in 19th century scholarly circles. Today more scholars are willing to admit that it was indeed Jeremiah, or possibly his secretary Baruch, who put together what we know as the book of Jeremiah.[106] The question has not been settled. Even if we are to date Jeremiah after the beginning of the exile, the Ge-hinnom passages may still only be understood within the context of the dramatic events of idolatry and reformation that occured around Jerusalem during the last decades before the exile. To this close connection of the Ge-hinnom passages with the ministry of the prophet I shall return below.

The language of the two Ge-hinnom prophecies of doom in Jeremiah is very strong. At first sight, the prophet seems to envision the literal destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah that was about to take place at the hands of the Babylonians (or had shortly before taken place). In 19:7 it is actually stated that the unbelievers will fall "before their enemies". Yet there are elements that would suggest that Jeremiah envisioned a greater and more complete destruction brought about by God himself. The phrase "the days are coming" is used three times in the two Ge-hinnom passages and could certainly suggest an eschatological event in the making. The picture of the destruction is also very vivid and goes beyond anything the Babylonians did: not only will there be no more place to bury the dead, but the land "will become waste" and "the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" would cease (7:34).

The phraseology of the third Ge-hinnom passage (31:27-40) would certainly verify this. The promised restoration pictures an idealised spiritual situation that goes beyond what the prophet could hope for in any return from the exile. The phrase "in those days" is used five times. In "those days" God will make a covenant with Israel and Judah and everybody will have an intimate relationship with and knowledge of God (31:31-34). Everything will be at peace because God will have forgiven their sin and will remember it no more (31:34). Jerusalem, once rebuilt will never be destroyed again (31:40).

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[106] Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 1-10; J.A. Thompson, 9-50.

It appears therefore that while the three references to Ge-hinnom in Jeremiah might relate to imminent or very recent events, the language seems to indicate that the prophet envisaged a future, divine destruction of the sinful and an idealised reconstitution of Israel and Judah as the people of God.

4) Other relevant texts

Almost as a supplement to (3), it is useful to consider some texts that also anticipate a punishment in a valley. The valley in some cases is named, while in others it is not; but even when it is, it is not clear if the name denotes a geographical location or has a symbolic function. A brief examination of such texts indicates that Ge-hinnom was not the only toponym connected with judgement; neither was it necessarily the most prominent.

The clearest such reference (most alluded to in the Gospels) is Isaiah 66:24. Isaiah 66:1-24 portrays a battle around Jerusalem where God will destroy apostate Jews and unbelieving Gentiles, while the righteous are given protection in Jerusalem. The prophet goes on to describe how the righteous will behold the dead bodies of the men who rebelled against God, lying outside Jerusalem. Then he mentions that "their worm shall not die" and the "fire shall not be quenched". The name of the valley where this happens is not given, but the similarities with Jeremiah are strong: a great battle followed by the death of the unbelievers who do not even have the honour of burial.

Another text in Isaiah with a thematic link to Ge-hinnom is 30:33. Here the prophet announces that the "Topheth" has long been prepared with a fire kindled by God for the king of Assyria.[107] Topheth eventually became a toponym for Ge-hinnom. Whether here it is used as such or whether it should be understood as a common noun meaning "hearth" or "fireplace" is debatable. The latter is more probable. E. Fudge has suggested that this verse was inspired by the destruction of an Assyrian army outside Jerusalem.[108] According to Isaiah 37:36 a large number of Assyrian soldiers were slain while attempting to attack Jerusalem, and it is possible that their bodies where burned in a massive pyre, hence providing the inspiration for the tradition of a fiery "topheth" of 30:33.

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[107] "Tophet" appears as a toponym in Jeremiah's Ge-hinnom passages. In Isaiah the word is actually תפתה which possibly derives from תפה. See Koehler and Baumgartner, 1781.
[108] Fudge, *Fire*, 160.

In Ezekiel 39:11-16 there is another description of an eschatological battle in a valley between God and Gog. The valley is named both as "Oberim" and as "Ammon-Gog". The RSV renders it as valley of the "Travellers" based on the possible etymology of "Oberim", while Koehler and Baumgartner see it as a geographical location in the land of Moab.[109] Verse 11 places the valley "east of the sea" thus lending support to the above suggestion. The name Ammon-Gog appears to be symbolic and means "multitudes of Gog". In this valley the enemies of God will meet their doom. As in Jeremiah's Ge-hinnom texts, the corpses will be so many that they will be eventually buried, though only with the utmost difficulty. Eventually the earth will be cleansed of the pollution of the dead bodies (39:16).

Finally, Joel 3:1-21 also pictures a coming war where the people of Judah and Jerusalem are pitted against Tyre and Sidon and all the "nations" guilty of having mistreated the people of God by selling them as slaves to the Greeks (3:2-6). So God summons them and the people of Judah to the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is located near Zion (3:16), for judgement and battle/punishment. Multitudes gather (3:14). There, God will destroy the mighty ones of His enemies (3:11). This battle will happen on the "day of the Lord" that is fast approaching. The prophecy includes images like the sun and the moon becoming dark (3:15). It is not clear if the name Jehoshaphat refers to a literal valley. From the time of Jerome onwards it was thought to be another name for the valley of Kidron, on account of a supposed monument that king Jehoshaphat had built in that valley.[110] Bailey associates this text with the valley of "Tyropoeon" which runs through Jerusalem, on the ground that "Tyropoeon" cuts the city in two, and suggests the word יהושפט comes from the verb "to cut".[111] Alternatively, the name may simply symbolise the day of judgement since יהושפט means "Yahweh judges".[112]

Several observations can be made from this brief overview of the relevant Old Testament material. First, the appellation Ge-hinnom, or its variants, is well attested in late pre-exilic to early post-exilic times as a geographical reference to a valley outside Jerusalem in which important events in the religious history of Judah took

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[109] Koehler and Baumgartner, 182, 783.
[110] Mare, 668-9. The association of the valley of Jehoshaphat with the valley of Kidron is plausible inasmuch as the former is located outside Jerusalem. However, there is no evidence of any monument built in the Kidron by king Jehoshaphat.
[111] Bailey, 186-92.
[112] Koehler and Baumgartner, 397.

place. Second, the eschatological motif where God judges and destroys the wicked (unbelieving Jews, Gentiles or both) through an eschatological battle in a valley, often outside Jerusalem, is also well attested. Third, the direct association of such judgement/destruction with the name Ge-hinnom is poor. It is only found twice, once directly and once indirectly in Jeremiah. In these instances, Ge-hinnom seems to reflect the deep impact that Josiah's reforms had made upon the people of Judah. It is therefore associated to a specific *Sitz im Leben* of an early date, and there is no reason to assume that Jeremiah's association of divine punishment with Ge-hinnom would have taken root.

On the contrary, the evidence considered above points in the opposite direction. The later post-exilic writings like Nehemiah and 2 Chronicles continue to make casual references to a literal Ge-hinnom without any extended or symbolic use of the term. It would be difficult to suppose that later writers would continue unapologetically to refer to this small valley outside Jerusalem as Ge-hinnom if there was already a well-developed tradition linking the name with eschatological judgement and the punishment of the enemies of God. Additionally, writings contemporary to or later than Jeremiah (Ez. 39:11-15; Joel 3:1-21), when they do speak of judgement in a valley, fail to mention Ge-hinnom by name, as we have seen. This can only mean that the word Ge-hinnom had not developed yet into a byword for the punishment that God would inflict on the wicked in the eschatological future.

It seems inescapable therefore to conclude that the specific use of the name Ge-hinnom with reference to eschatological punishment was a rather obscure tradition, found only in Jeremiah, and not apparently popularised in subsequent Old Testament works.

Early Jewish Literature

It is often taken for granted that the next step in the development of the Gehenna tradition is to be found is the various Jewish writings dating from the third century BC to the second AD. R. H. Charles in his monumental study on Jewish and Christian eschatology, reconstructs this development with considerable detail. He argues that in the earlier Old Testament books the concept of Gehenna is to be found only in embryonic form and that it begins to develop only with some passages in Isaiah (30:33; 50:11; 66:24) and in Daniel (12:2), which he dates no earlier than the

third century and very likely to the second. [113] Originally, Gehenna is envisaged as referring to the immediate punishment of apostate Jews and in the second century it broadens to include the final abode in the next world. By the first century it slowly began to include other nations as well.[114] The corporeal nature of the punishment begins to recede to the background, as the sufferings were now believed to affect only the soul.

Charles' detailed analysis is interesting but today rather outdated. Further inquiry into the composition of Jewish "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha", as well as into some of the Old Testament books referred to by Charles, throws his chronological sequence into serious doubt. Nonetheless, the notion that this body of Jewish writings does indeed represent the next step of development of the Gehenna tradition is widely accepted. With these thoughts in mind it is useful to take a look at the evidence.

LXX

The Roman numerals LXX are used as an abbreviation of the word "Septuagint" which in turn designates the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. The story of the translation as expressed in the Letter of Aristeas[115] hardly represents events as they happened. Nonetheless, it is usually accepted that the Hebrew Scriptures began to be translated into Greek after Alexander the Great's conquests that made Hellenistic influence dominant in the Middle East. The translation began with the Pentateuch, probably in the third century BC and continued with the other writings. It was presumably done primarily for the large Greek-speaking Jewish community of Alexandria. Today there are many different manuscripts extant with considerable variations in reading and a critical text of the complete LXX Old Testament has yet to be worked out.[116]

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[113] Charles, *Future Life*, 161-163,244,272,474-475.
[114] He cites Jud. 16:17; SE 1 En. 48:9; 54:1,2; 62:12,13.
[115] According to the Letter of Aristeas, king Ptolemy Philadelphus (c 285-244 BC) called on seventy-two Jewish scholars – six from each tribe – to translated their Scriptures into Greek for the king's library in Alexandria.
[116] There are four important critical editions of the LXX: Swete's, the Cambridge LXX, Rahlfs and Göttingen. The first two follow Codex Vaticanus (B). Swete's critical apparatus is rather limited; the Cambridge is much more complete but, sadly, by 1940, when the project came to a halt, only half the LXX had been published. Rahlfs 1935 edition is based on the three main Codices, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus. Possibly the most important edition is the Göttingen LXX. Unlike the other three, it does not rely on one codex. Rather, the text is a result of careful assessment of all available texts.

In the discussion of the Ge-hinnom passages above it was noted that the LXX closely parallels the Masoretic and the few instances where the Greek gives a slight difference in emphasis are discussed in the relevant footnotes. This may suggest that the translators did not feel the need to expand on the description of Ge-hinnom, as may have been the case had there been a well-developed tradition associating the toponym Ge-hinnom with eschatological punishment, as in the New Testament and later Jewish writings. That such a tradition had not yet developed is suggested by the way that the LXX renders the name of this valley.

The three different ways in the Hebrew text noted above of referring to Ge-hinnom, are translated into a number of Greek forms. We have, for example, φάραγξ Ὀνόμ, Ἐννόμ, or Ἐννώμ,[117] φάραγξ υἱοῦ Ἐννόμ,[118] πολυάνδριον υἱοῦ Ἐννόμ,[119] Γαί Ὀννόμ,[120] Γαιβενθόμ,[121] Γαμβέ Ἐννόμ,[122] Γεβανέ Ἐννόμ,[123] Γαίεννα,[124] νάπης Σοννάμ,[125] γῆ Βεεννόμ,[126] and νάπης υἱοῦ Ἐννόμ[127]. Of these, Γαίεννα bears closest relation to the form of "Gehenna" (Γέεννα) of the New Testament, and it is used in a text without any religious or eschatological implications. The large number of variations in translating the Hebrew would suggest that there had not developed a fixed tradition that would conjure up images of divine punishment.

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

In the "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha" there are several references to Gehenna.[128] After noting the relevant passages, I shall consider the degree to which they provide a background to the Synoptics.

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[117] Josh. 15:8 A and B respectively, and Neh. 11:30 (S).
[118] Jer. 7:31, 32 (B).
[119] Jer. 19:6 (B).
[120] Josh. 18:16, (A).
[121] 2 Chron. 28:3 (B).
[122] 2 Chron. 28:3 (A).
[123] 2 Chron. 33:6 (B).
[124] Josh. 18:16.
[125] Josh. 18:16 (B).
[126] 2 Chron. 33:6 (A).
[127] Josh. 18:16 (A).
[128] In looking at the references to Gehenna in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, I have used the indexes of Charles, *APOT*, and Charlesworth, *OTP*. In general, we should keep in mind that the extant texts for most of these writings are considerably later than the actual composition and often show evidence of later additions. It is thus difficult to determine whether the word "Gehenna", when it occurs, was part of the original or subsequently interpolated.

In 4 Ezra 2:29 and 7:36 we have two references. The former offers some advice in order that "your sons will not see Gehenna" which is reserved as a fate for the nations (2:28). The context is of a judgement after a bodily resurrection, since 2:29 refers to the sons of the righteous who "sleep" in the hiding places of the earth – i.e. are dead in their graves. 4 Ezra 7:36 makes mention of the "pit of torment that will appear... the furnace of Gehenna[129] [that] will be made manifest." 4 Ezra is composite in nature. B. Metzger suggests that it was written between AD 100 on the basis of a supposed reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in 3:1, and 120 on grounds that a Jewish work would hardly have found its way into Christian circles (as 4 Ezra did), after the Bar-Kochba rebellion.[130] Stone questions attempts to date the work on internal evidence. It must have been written, however, well before AD 190 since it is quoted by Clement of Alexandria in a non-extant Greek form,[131] which in turn, Stone maintains, was a translation of a Hebrew original.[132] The work was probably composed in Palestine and bears a close resemblance to the later book 2 Baruch. It wielded considerable influence on later writers. As chapters 1-2 are later Christian additions (including the 2:29 reference to Gehenna) 4 Ezra proper begins with chapter 3. 4 Ezra therefore furnishes us with only one possible authentic reference, 7:36: here Gehenna is a furnace and a place of torment for the wicked, in contrast to Jeremiah where it is a place of annihilation in a battle.

In 2 Baruch there are two references: 59:10 and 85:13. In the first instance God shows to Moses "the mouth of Gehenna" among many other places, paradise included. Gehenna is the locale where the wicked will be tormented in the coming judgement, according to their wickedness (54:21). Then God will blot them out (54:22). In the second instance, the writer makes reference to the way of fire, and the path, which leads to Gehenna where there is no repentance.[133] 2 Baruch is dated after the destruction of the temple in AD 70, possibly around or after 100.[134] For chapters 1-77 there is only one manuscript in Syriac, whereas for the last nine (78-86) there are

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[129] "Gehenna" in the Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Georgian versions, but "fire" in the Arabic 1 and 2 and the Armenian versions (Stone, *Ezra*, 203).
[130] Metzger, OTP, 1:520.
[131] Greek fragments published are translations from the Latin (Stone, *Ezra*, 5).
[132] Stone, *Ezra*, 9-10.
[133] Charles, APOT, 1:470-526; cf. Klijn, OTP, 1:652.
[134] Klijn, OTP, 1:616-7.

several. The last nine chapters are not part of the original composition but later additions. Some of the 85:13 manuscripts do not contain the word Gehenna at all.[135]

In the Ascension of Isaiah there are two texts: 1:3 and 4:14. The first makes a passing reference to the "torments of Gehenna". The second describes the return of the Messiah, after a short reign on earth by Beliar and his hosts. As the Messiah arrives from heaven, the saints leave their human body behind and their souls ascend to meet him (4:17). In contrast, Beliar, his hosts and all the wicked are to suffer the torments of Gehenna where they will be "consumed" and "will become as if they had not been created" (4:18). There is thus a contrast between the righteous who move to a higher level of immaterial existence and the wicked who suffer annihilation in their body. The significance of the Ascension for early Judaism is marginal, however. Whereas initially this book was considered to be a collection of three separate compositions, containing both Jewish and Christian material,[136] more recent research suggests that the whole composition is Christian in origin.[137]

In 3 Enoch 44:3 and 48D:8 there are two more references to Gehenna. The work is Jewish and extant, though in different forms, in several manuscripts. It is attributed to rabbi Ishmael of Palestine who died in AD 132 shortly before the Bar Kochba rebellion. However, as P. Alexander indicates,[138] it is a pseudepigraphon of much later composition, which might contain some early traditions. In 43:1-3 the patriarch Enoch is first shown the immaterial and pre-existent souls of the righteous in heaven in the presence of God. Then in chapter 44 he is shown the souls of the wicked carried by the angels Zaariel and Samkiel to be tortured in Gehenna with rods of iron. There follow some terrifying descriptions of the faces of the wicked turning green and their souls being black, but eventually they are purified (44:5). In 48D:8 Gehenna has been in existence since the week of creation.

In the Apocalypse of Abraham 15:6 the visionary, while flying on a pigeon, saw a light in which "a fiery Gehenna was enkindled". Again the fires of Gehenna are presumed to have existed from ancient times. Abraham sees a crowd of wicked people suffering there, from which one may infer that the whole body is thrown into its fires. The Apocalypse of Abraham in its current form is Christian, but derives from a Jewish work. It is dated towards the end of the first century AD. It was

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[135] *l* reads "to the glowing coals" while *c* "to the realms of death".
[136] Knibb, OTP, 1:143-176.
[137] Carey, 65-78.
[138] Alexander, OTP, 1:226.

probably composed in Hebrew, though now it is extant only in Slavonic versions from the 14th to the 17th centuries.[139]

In the Greek Apocalypse of Ezra 1:9 there is one brief mention of Gehenna. Despite its mention however, the writer envisioned eschatological punishment as occuring in the valley of Jehoshaphat (3:5ff), thus showing a preference for the motif of Joel 3:1ff. The context of the punishment is the final judgement of the wicked in bodily form, and the result is their total annihilation. The Greek Apocalypse of Ezra is dated anywhere from AD 150 to 850.[140]

Among the Sibylline Oracles there are three references – 1:104, 2:292, 4:186. J. Collins has dated the Jewish Oracles from 30 BC to AD 250 though most likely at the turn of the era, while the Christian portions after AD 70.[141] Book 3 is considered to be the earliest, while Books 1, 2 and 4 could not have been composed before the end of the first century.[142] This is the terminus post quem - the earliest possible dating. 1:104 describes how the "Watchers" were noble but nevertheless "went to the dread house of Tartarus... to Gehenna, of terrible, raging, undying fire." The tradition of the noble "Watchers" who became corrupt is old and described in detail in the Book of Watchers (1 Enoch 1-36 – hence BW), where the "Watchers"[143] are angelic beings – the fallen "sons of God" of Genesis 6:1.[144] The place names Tartarus and Gehenna, however, do not appear in any of the 1 Enoch books, and so have been introduced by the pseudo-Sibyl, or derive from another tradition. It is not clear if the mention of "undying fire" of 1:104 should be understood to imply that the suffering continues forever. 2:292 is much clearer. The writer envisions angels who will throw the wicked into Gehenna.[145] There are detailed descriptions of the suffering, and the wicked will "call death fair, ...[but] it will evade them" (2:307). In contrast, 4:186 says that those who have sinned by impiety, "a mound of earth [will] cover, and broad Tartarus, and the repulsive recesses of Gehenna." The punishment of Gehenna comes after a conflagration that burns everything and turns it to ashes (4:171-178). There

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[139] Rubinkiewicz, OTP, 1:681-705.
[140] Stone, OTP, 1:561-579.
[141] Collins, OTP, 1:331. Geffcken, 49, has dated both Jewish and Christian Oracles in the 3rd century.
[142] Books 1 and 2 must have been written after Theophilus wrote towards the end of the first century, for they show an awareness of his work. Book 4 must have been written after AD 80 because it makes reference both to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. On the dating see Schürer, 3:632-643.
[143] ἐγρήγοροις, see Stuckenbruck, "Glossaries", 42.
[144] Cf. SE 1 En. 69; AA 1 En. 86-88; Jub. 5; 2; En. 18:7; T. Reub. 5:6-7; T. Naph. 3:5.
[145] For Christian redaction on book 2 see Kurfess, APOT 2:703-745.

follows a general bodily resurrection (4:181, 182) and then the wicked suffer their fate. The mound of earth suggests that Gehenna functions as a near equivalent for the grave, suggesting the annihilation of those thrown into it.

Last but not least is the testimony of 1 Enoch. This early and very influential collection of books deals to a considerable extent with the eventual fate of the righteous and the wicked. The word "Gehenna" does not occur but there are a number of allusions to lakes or valleys of fire, possibly in the environs of Jerusalem. Two of the more important come from the Similitudes (1 Enoch 37-71 – hence SE), which is the only portion of the book not found at Qumran and whose date has been a matter of considerable debate.[146] The first occurrence (54:1-6), describes the punishment of Azazel and his hosts in a deep valley.[147] The name of the valley is not given. SE 1 Enoch 54 and 56 are set within the context of a long vision. In chapter 52 Enoch is carried off "in a wind vehicle" to the west (52:1), and sees "a mountain of iron, a mountain of copper, a mountain of silver, a mountain of gold, a mountain of coloured metal, and a mountain of lead" (52:2). The valley in question is located in another direction of the compass (54:1). It is called the "Abyss of complete condemnation" (54:5), and contains "imprisonment chains" for Azazel and his hosts (54:4). The second reference comes in 56:1-4. It is not clear if the valleys of SE 1 Enoch 54 and 56 are identical; however since that second valley is also called an "abyss" suggests that they are. In the valley of 56, Azazel, the evil angels and everything associated with them come to an end and are not "henceforth... reckoned" (56:4). While the valley(s) in question is/are said to be located on the face of the earth (54:1), the mention of metal mountains and the comparison of the valley(s) to an abyss connotes a cosmic, rather than Judean geographical setting. This, coupled with

[146] The question of the date of the Enochic Similitudes has not been settled. Some would argue in favor of an early date on two premises: (a) a possible reference (56:5-7) to the Parthian invasion of Palestine in 40-37 BC, and (b) possible relation to some New Testament texts. The first premise cannot stand, both because the reference is very vague and also because while the Similitudes view the coming of the Parthians ("Persians") as a disaster, generally the Jews welcomed it. The second premise is also precarious – if there is any relation between the Similitudes and the New Testament, the influence could be either way. The fact that the Similitudes were not found in Qumran could suggest a date later than AD 68. Milik, 91-8, considers the Similitudes a Christian composition and dates them in the late third century AD. The SNTS Seminar on the Pseudepigrapha that met in Paris in 1979 overwhelmingly came out in favor of a first century AD date. See, Knibb, "Date", 345-59; Charlesworth, "Seminars", 315-23; Mearns, "Dating", 360-69, "Date", 118-9..

[147] Black, 1-10.

the absence of a place name for the valley(s), makes any attempt to associate these passages with Ge-hinnom conjecture.[148]

There is, however, one passage in BW 1 Enoch that is early in date and appears to be relevant.[149] The text in question is 27:1-2 where an accursed valley is mentioned.[150] The righteous are said to inhabit a mountain (Mount Zion?) from where they see the wicked suffering under the judgement of God. This reference is often quoted as a forerunner to the Gehenna motif in the New Testament.[151] However, this association remains uncertain. In discussing the Old Testament material above, we noted that divine punishment in Ge-hinnom was only one of several punishment-in-a valley motifs. While it is plausible that BW 1 Enoch 27:1-2 reflects the Ge-hinnom texts of Jeremiah, it is equally plausible that it reflects thematically similar texts like Joel 3:1-3 in which the location of punishment is the valley of Kidron or Tyropoeon.[152] Whatever the meaning, however, the fact that the word Gehenna is not mentioned indicates that the name of the valley had not here become a by-word for the punishment God in the sense it appears in the gospels.[153]

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[148] Cf. my comments on 1 En. 90:20-27 below.

[149] Indeed, Montgomery, 33, calls this passage "the earliest evidence" for the association of hell with the valley of Hinnom.

[150] Charles, *Enoch*, 57. Isaac's translation of the Ethiopic text (OTP, 27), reads: "For what purpose does this blessed land... (have) in its midst this accursed valley?" Extant Greek Manuscripts (primarily Panopolitanus) phrase the question slightly differently: "and why is this valley accursed?" In the Ethiopic, Enoch expresses surprise that the accursed valley is located in the midst of the blessed land. In the Greek, he expresses surprise at the very existence of an accursed valley. The Ethiopic would thus be more in harmony with the existence of developed traditions of punishment in a valley. The relevant Aramaic phrase is not extant in Qumran ultimately leaving the issue of which version is more authentic, in the balance.

[151] Davies and Allison, 1:514.

[152] In this respect, it is appropriate to comment on AA 1 En. 90:20-27 which Davies and Allison, 1:514, also consider a reference to Gehenna. The writer sees a fiery Abyss located "at the right hand of the house" (90:27 - presumably the temple), "in the middle of the ground" (90:26), and into which, the sinners are thrown. The compass direction of the right hand depends on the direction the writer was facing. If he was facing north, the valley would be the Kidron; if south, then Tyropoeon. If the reference to the Abyss in the "middle of the ground" refers to the middle of Jerusalem, then it would be a reference to the Tyropoeon that dissects the city. It could definitely not be Ge-hinnom, because Ge-hinnom is located on the opposite side of the city from where the temple stood.

[153] Nickelsburg, *Enoch*, 318-9, assumes the valley of Hinnom is intended here though he admits the concept of an eschatological Gehenna flourished later. He draws a parallel between the righteous "seing" the suffering of the wicked as expressed in the Ethiopic text of 27:3a, and a similar motif in the LXX of Dan. 12:2 and Is.66:24 of which, at least the later, he believes pictures the valley of Hinnom. He also sees the valley of Hinnom in AA 1 En. 90:26 in the "abyss" that is opened in the center of the earth. In the absence of a clear reference to the valley of Hinnom in these texts and in light of the absence of evidence for the contemporary use of Gehenna as a byword for punishment, Nickelsburg's association is forced.

This brief overview of Gehenna in the "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha"[154] has yielded only a few early texts of possible relevance: 4 Ezra 7:36, 2 Baruch 59:10, Apocalypse of Abraham 15:6 and possibly the three texts in the Sibylline Oracles. However these are all dated after AD 70, toward the end of the century or even later. We have also observed a move away from corporeal punishment to punishment that involves the soul, as well as a move away from annihilation of the wicked to Gehenna as a place of fearful torment, often everlasting.

Other Early Jewish Writings

When looking at other Jewish documents, one is struck by the lack of references to Gehenna. The Dead Sea Scrolls are completely silent. The relevant texts of Jeremiah are absent from the biblical manuscripts. More conspicuous is the absence of the word in the War Rule. Since this document portrays an eschatological battle between the "sons of light" and the "sons of darkness" Ge-hinnom would be the natural locale for such a battle. The complete absence of any reference suggests that, at least within the community of Qumran, the Ge-hinnom texts of Jeremiah did not exert a strong influence.

Philo and Josephus are also silent on Gehenna as a place of punishment. Nonetheless, in Josephus there could be references to the valley without the use of the name. In "War of the Jews" VI.8.5, he refers to Jewish soldiers who, while being pursued by the Romans, run to the valley "which is below Siloam". The pool of Siloam was located near the spot where the valleys of Kidron, Tyropoeon and Ge-hinnom met. Likewise, in V.12.2 Josephus describes how the Romans built a wall encompassing Jerusalem, which passed above the valley that is "below Siloam". Finally, in V.12.3 he explains that as the siege of Jerusalem progressed and famine began to take its toll among the inhabitants of the city, the corpses of those who had died were thrown into the valleys below the city walls - presumably including the valley below Siloam. Such references not only undermine the claim that the valley of Ge-hinnom had become Jerusalem's rubbish dump, but also enhance the view that the

[154] Charles would add the T. Mos. 10:10 where in the Latin we find the word *terram*. Charles, who took a special interest in Gehenna, thought that behind *terram* lay the Greek γῆ which, in turn, transliterated the Hebrew גי (supposedly short for Ge-hinnom). Obviously such a reconstruction is highly speculative and is further undermined by the fact that the Hebrew גי and the Greek γῆ have a different meaning.

name Gehenna had not fully developed into a by-word of destruction, at least within Jewish circles.

The Mishnah/Talmud

The Mishnah is a collection of oral traditions and took its final shape sometime in the beginning of the third century AD. This would seem to disqualify it as a witness for the development of the Gehenna tradition up to the time of the New Testament save that it contains traditions that purport to go back as early as the third century BC.[155] To what extent such traditions were transmitted accurately is a matter of conjecture, yet our search would be incomplete without brief mention of them. Five references to Gehenna take the form גי־הנם,[156] four of which are attributed to rabbis who lived well after the first century AD. Nonetheless, in Pirqe Aboth 1:5 a reference is attributed to Rabbi Jose ben Johanan who lived during the second century BC. However, it is almost certain that R. Jose's words end with 1:4 and that 1:5 is a much later addition, perhaps by the compiler himself.[157]

The Babylonian Talmud with exegetical comments on the Mishnah, was compiled perhaps as late as the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Similar to the Mishnah, it purports to contain material from rabbis who lived as early as the first century BC. The accuracy of the attributions is open to question given a gap of several centuries. Nonetheless the historical witness of the Talmud is important as we are trying to discern how and when the idea of Gehenna as the eschatological place of punishment developed and gained prominence. The word Gehenna appears well over fifty times, in most instances attributed to rabbis of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. The earliest attributions would be to Akiba ben Joseph[158] towards the end of the first century AD, to Johanan ben Zakkai[159] well after the middle of the first century, and to the School of Shammai[160] anytime from AD 50 to the Bar Kochba revolt.

This overview of the Hebrew Bible and the early Jewish writings to the first century AD has provided us with an impressive accumulation of evidence: lack of interest for the toponym Ge-hinnom among the later Hebrew prophets concerned with eschatological punishment; casual references to Ge-hinnom in late historical Old

[155] Neusner, *Judaism*, 25-28.
[156] *Kidd.* 4:14; *Eduy.* 2:10; Ab. 1:5; 5:19; 5:20.
[157] Herford, APOT, 2:692.
[158] E.g. *Bab. Bat.* 10a; *b. Hag.* 15a.
[159] *Ber.* 28b.
[160] *R. Hash.* 16b; cf. Tosefta *Sanh.* 13:3.

Testament books; absence of exegetical additions and casual transliterations of Ge-hinnom in the LXX, that do not betray a strong Gehenna tradition; and complete silence of such important witnesses as the Dead Sea documents, Josephus, Philo, the early Mishnah and Talmud rabbis and of the early "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha". None of these observations lead to the conclusion that the evidence supports, or even hints at, a coherent, gradual development of the theme beginning with Jeremiah and continuing down the centuries. On the contrary, what we have is a large and obvious gap. Jeremiah makes reference to punishment in Ge-hinnom having been impressed by very specific events that took place there (the great apostasy of Ahaz and Manasseh and the radical activities of the reforming Josiah) and then the concept lies dormant for centuries. It seems therefore that there is no evidence that Gehenna was a part of common eschatological judgement parlance at any time before the first century AD.[161]

This conclusion is further strengthened by the thematic gap between Ge-hinnom in the Old Testament and Gehenna in later Jewish writings. Ge-hinnom in the Old Testament was a valley in which the apostate Jews would be annihilated in battle, their bodies being left unburied and exposed in shame. Fire plays only a minor role. Despite the eschatological overtones, the language does not have cosmic dimensions. In the "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha," on the other hand, Gehenna has become a term that signifies an eschatological, often out-of-this-world place. There the wicked, sometimes in their bodies, sometimes only as disembodied souls, are sometimes annihilated but often anguish in fire forever without end. It simply does not make sense to assume that the tradition developed from the simple battle-language of the Hebrew Scriptures to the otherworldly hell of bodies and/or, more often, souls, of the "Apocrypha" and "Pseudepigrapha", all at once. Since there are no extra-biblical Jewish literary works that contain evidence of intermediate steps in the development of the tradition, we have to look elsewhere for the missing links.

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[161] A number of writers have also noted the lack of evidence. E.g. Bailey, 191; Albright and Mann, 61-62.

Gehenna in the New Testament

In the New Testament there are twelve references to Gehenna. With the exception of James 3:6, all the others are found in the Synoptic Gospels [162] on the lips of Jesus.

A first question that naturally arises is whether in fact the Gehenna tradition was part of the proclamation of Jesus. W. Strawson, in his study of Gehenna in the Synoptics, rejects the authenticity of the term and suggests that all Gehenna references come from the evangelists and their environment, rather than from Jesus himself.[163] His recurring argument is that the setting fits better the context of the early Christian community rather than that of the life of Jesus. Behind this rather subjective estimation one senses Strawson's desire not to implicate Jesus with the strong language of the Gehenna texts, even though, as he rightly points out, even in their present form, the Gehenna texts of the Synoptics are much more mild and less horrific than the detailed, horrible depictions of eschatological punishment that we find among contemporary Jewish and later Christian writings.

Noble as Strawson's motives may be, two pieces of evidence testify against his view. First, as already stated, all Gehenna references are placed on the lips of Jesus. This suggests though not conclusively, the authenticity of the term. The fact that Gehenna appears in the New Testament only once beyond the sayings of Jesus, indicates it was not a popular term among at least a considerable portion of the early Church. Why then would the evangelists record this word, if they were not convinced it actually came from Jesus?[164]

Secondly, the material is distributed throughout the Synoptic sources. The Markan material has Gehenna three times, with another three in Matthew's material taken from Mark. There are two Q texts (Mt. 10:28; Lk.12:5)[165] sufficiently similar in expression to suggest a close literary relationship and sufficiently different to indicate either two different Q versions or important redactional activity from one or both

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[162] Mt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk. 9:43,45,47; Lk. 12:5.
[163] Strawson, 135-142.
[164] Robinson, in *Redating*, 97ff, sets out this same argument to support the authenticity of two other popular Synoptic terms, "Son of Man" and "kingdom of God" which likewise appear mostly on the lips of Jesus and practically disappear in the rest of the New Testament. He argues that the only reason the phrases were retained was because they derived from Jesus.
[165] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 89.

evangelists.[166] Finally, three Gehenna references are found in Matthew's special material. This diversity is a strong indication that even if we were to consider some of the Gehenna references as redactional, the word itself must have formed a part of the original preaching of Jesus.

A second question to be asked is to what extent the Synoptic materials give evidence of a unified Gehenna tradition. If the Synoptic references go back to Jesus, then some overall coherence in the use of the tradition should be expected. A final verdict on this must await a detailed critical analysis of the different texts in question, but at this point it is appropriate to offer some general comments. Two elements seem to relate all Synoptic Gehenna texts to one tradition. First, all the Synoptic texts picture Gehenna as the place where the wicked will be punished after a bodily resurrection. This is evidenced by the fact that the body plays a prominent part in those texts, which in itself is a second unifying factor.[167] Thus Matthew 5:22 compares punishment in Gehenna with the capital sentence human courts could pass. Even stronger "body language" can be found in Mark 9:43-48, Matthew 5:29, 30 and 18:9. Matthew 9:43 for example reads: "If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed, than with two hands to go to Gehenna."[168] Why? Because in Gehenna the body will suffer a worse fate. It is interesting to ponder the connection with Isaiah 66:1-24 which Mark makes, and even the Gehinnom passages in Jeremiah 7:29-34 and 19:1-14, all of which depict battle scenes that result in a devastation of mutilated and dead bodies.[169] Luke 12:4, 5 is even more bodily oriented by suggesting that what is thrown in Gehenna is the corpses of those whom God has killed again remind us of the motif in Isaiah 66:24.

A third question is the geographical factor in the development of the Gehenna tradition. Of the three Synoptics, Matthew shows a preference for Gehenna. Mark uses the term only in one pericope and is obliged to explain it through Isaiah 66:24. Luke uses the word only once in an obscure saying of secondary importance to his eschatological theology and it seems that the only reason he included it was a commitment to adhere faithfully to his source. Since Matthew is recognised as the

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[166] See my discussion of Mt. 10:28 and Lk.12:5 where I suggest that Luke retains a more original form.
[167] A judgement in the body suggests some sort of bodily regeneration or resurrection.
[168] Bible texts quoted, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the RSV.
[169] Cf. the parable of the Wicked Servant in Mt.25:45-51 where the king will "cut him in two" (διχοτομέω), an obvious battle scene.

most Palestinian of the gospels,[170] we therefore have an indication that the Gehenna tradition, after hibernating for several centuries, sprang back to life within Palestinian circles.

Further evidence corroborates. The only other New Testament writing that mentions Gehenna is James. The epistles of Paul, Acts, the Catholic epistles and the Revelation apparently had a Gentile majority readership in view. This might well be the reason why the writers chose to leave the word Gehenna out, as to many not familiar with the preaching of Jesus and with the canonical Hebrew Scriptures, the term would have made little sense.

In our overview of the non-canonical Jewish material we have noticed that the word Gehenna began to appear and gain popularity from the mid-first century AD onwards. Looking back at the works that mention Gehenna, we may suppose that the Mishnah, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham would certainly seem to have been Palestinian works, while the provenance of the Sibylline Oracles remains in question. On the other hand, Philo and Josephus who wrote during the first century away from Judea for a non-Palestinian readership, refrain from using it (or are not aware of it?). It is natural therefore to conclude that the use of the word Gehenna as a place of eschatological punishment, beyond the Jeremaic usage, grew within Judean circles.

A fourth and very important question concerns chronological priority – did the Gehenna language of the gospels spring from contemporary Jewish writings or is the opposite true? I have already touched on this question several times above, but let us bring the chronological data together. The Synoptics and the Epistle of James are dated around the pivotal point of AD 70 (or considerably earlier by some scholars), and usually, not later than AD 100.[171] By this date the Gehenna tradition was well established within Christian circles. Furthermore, as we saw earlier, it most likely

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[170] Mark is usually associated with Rome, and Luke seems to have written for a Gentile reader, Theophilus (Lk. 1:1). The belief in a Judean origin for Matthew goes back to Papias and has had strong support both among early Church Fathers and more recent scholars. See Streeter, 485ff, for an alternative evaluation and compare with Schniewind, 2, 3.

[171] The date of composition of these writings is a subject of on-going debate with opinions greatly divided. Guthrie, (45-6,72-76,110-15, 761-4), gives the following dates: Matthew, AD 80-100, Mark, before 60, Luke 60-61, James, before 62. Gundry, (*New Testament*, 81,85,96-7,345) likewise opts for early dates as follows: Matthew, AD 60's, Mark, early 50's, Luke, before 64, James, before 62. Brown, (*Introduction*, 163-4,216-7,273-4,741-2) more characteristically opts for later dates: Matthew, AD 80-90, Mark, 68-73, Luke, 80-100, James, 70-100.

goes back to Jesus, and that we can establish a date around AD 30 for a Christian usage. In contrast, the earliest Jewish references cannot be dated earlier than AD 70.

To this we may add that (a) the Christian Gehenna texts are thematically closer to the original source of the Gehenna tradition – Jeremiah – with their strong emphasis in the body, and (b) have a coherence that reflects a unified source and tradition. By contrast, the Jewish writings (a) move away from the body towards an interest in the disembodied soul, and (b) contain a broader and less unified understanding of Gehenna. These two observations suggest that the Jewish material represents a more distant descendant of the original Jeremaic Ge-hinnom.

This brief survey of the New Testament material alone, and in relation to other Jewish writings therefore shows four things: (1) the term Gehenna was a part of the preaching of Jesus and gained some popularity within Judean circles while being slowly received among Gentiles; (2) all synoptic Gehenna references share an eschatological expectation that places the punishment of the wicked after their resurrection; (3) the language is oriented towards the body reminding us thus of the Ge-hinnom[172] motif in Jeremiah; and (4) the New Testament material represents an earlier stage than extra-biblical Jewish writings in the development of the Gehenna tradition.

Suggested Reconstruction

On the basis of the above I propose the following reconstruction for the development of the Gehenna tradition:

Towards the end of the monarchy in Judah, the valley of Ge-hinnom became notorious because of the idolatrous acts perpetrated there by different kings of Judah. Josiah, in his sweeping reforms, desecrated the valley and burned the altars, possibly using the bones of dead people to defile it so that it could not be re-used for the worship of heathen deities. This act left a strong impression on the minds of the people of Jerusalem, who now considered the valley as unclean.

Sometime around the exile, the prophecies of Jeremiah were recorded. While the memory of Josiah's reforms lingered among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Jeremiah's oracles depict the destruction of Jerusalem in vivid language that could not fail to impress. This destruction involves a massacre of the wicked with massive loss

[172] A similarity of perspective reflects an early stage in the development of a tradition, which usually branches out and diversifies as it develops.

of life. The prophecies envisioned the literal destruction of the city at the hands of the Babylonians. Nonetheless, certain elements within them, like the use of phrases like "the days are coming" and such exaggerated pictures as "there will be no more place to bury the dead" or pictures of an idealised restitution, indicate that the prophecies looked beyond the literal destruction and restitution to an eschatological act of God.

As the impact of Josiah's reforms and actions in Ge-hinnom were slowly forgotten, so did the association of divine retribution with this valley. Later writers do give evidence of similarities with Jeremiah in depicting God's eschatological retribution in terms of an eschatological battle, but no specific association with the valley of Ge-hinnom is evident.

Ge-hinnom continued to be the name of a valley, and to be understood in a purely geographical sense. From Jeremiah until the first century AD it is nowhere associated with the punishment of the wicked.

According to the evidence we have, the first to revive Ge-hinnom out of its resting place was Jesus who used the term extensively in his preaching. The words of Jesus must have made an impression. The mention of Gehenna was recorded in three main gospel sources – Mark, Q, and M. Matthew and James used the word without hesitation writing for people who must have been aware of the Jesus tradition. The other two Synoptic evangelists felt constrained to use Gehenna in the knowledge that it had formed part of Jesus' preaching. Because Gehenna was recorded in the New Testament it eventually became a common term for later Christians who wrote on the punishment of the wicked.

At roughly the same time, the association of the toponym Gehenna with eschatological judgement also began to grow in Jewish apocalyptic circles. The evidence comes mostly from the end of the first century AD and beyond, but the tradition had probably been developing for some time. Thus both the Jewish and Christian traditions developed in parallel. Whether there was a direct influence from Jewish to Christian circles or vice-versa or whether the traditions developed independently cannot be determined with certainty. It is not unlikely that the interest in Gehenna grew from theological discussions between Jesus, before the crucifixion, and the disciples, after Pentecost, on the one hand, and the Jewish rabbis, on the other. Alternatively, the possibility that the teaching and preaching of Jesus was a catalyst that transformed the toponym Ge-hinnom into the locale of eschatological punishment

par excellence should also not be discounted. In such a case, it is possible that Gehenna entered Jewish parlance through the influence of the early Christians.[173]

[173] There is a tendency to minimize or reject any possible influence of Jesus and Christianity on Judaism. Yet the two systems co-existed closely, if not always amicably, for a whole century within the small confines of Palestine and beyond. The Jewish influence on early Christianity is widely recognized and documented, but there is no reason why the influence should not have been in both directions.

Chapter II

Mark 9:43-50

> [43]If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to [Gehenna], to the unquenchable fire.
> [44]
> [45]And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into [Gehenna].
> [46]
> [47]And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into [Gehenna],
> [48]where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.
> [49]For every one will be salted with fire.
> [50]Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."[174]

Mark 9:43-50 is an important Gehenna text for two reasons. The first is its early date. If the two-document hypothesis is assumed,[175] Mark 9:43-50 is the earliest Synoptic text to contain Gehenna - a total of three times. As such, it may be thought to have directly influenced Matthew 5:29-30 and 18:8-9 (in parallel traditions), and possibly, directly or indirectly, the other Gehenna occurrences in Matthew and Luke. Furthermore, according to the reconstruction of the development of the tradition suggested in the previous chapter, Mark 9:43-50 would also be the first extant written use outside the Hebrew scriptures of the word Gehenna as a reference to the eschatological punishment of unrepentant sinners.

Second, Mark 9:43-50 is significant because it contains a description of what the punishment of Gehenna was envisioned to be. It is no surprise therefore that its language, particularly the "worm" that "does not die" and the "fire" that cannot be quenched, exerted considerable influence on later Christian writings about hell.[176] More importantly, this text is perhaps the most common New Testament reference alluded to as evidence for the belief that never-ending torment awaits unrepentant sinners. Thus M.F. Sadler wrote back in 1887: "The triple declaration [vs. 44,46,48 -

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[174] In the *textus receptus*, 9:44 and 46 repeat 9:48 and are not included in NA.
[175] See comments in the Introduction on my approach to the Synoptic problem in this study.
[176] See Himmelfarb, *Tours*.

sic] of the latter part is, doubtless, on account of the unwillingness of the human heart to accept the doctrine of Eternal Punishment."[177] On a similar note, the famous preacher and writer of the 18th century, Matthew Henry, while commenting on Mark's Gehenna text, explained that the "worm" represents the internal suffering of sinners as a result of their guilty conscience, and the "fire" signifies external sufferings that would come directly from God.[178]

This chapter therefore will deal with some of the important issues raised by Mark 9:43-50, namely: (a) what is its tradition-historical background, i.e. what are the sources behind Mark 9:43-50, and what is their theological contribution to an understanding of this text; and (b) what is the significance of this passage for the evangelist's eschatological expectations concerning to the judgement of the wicked?

Tradition-Historical Background

In discussing the tradition-historical background, it becomes obvious that scriptural imagery and language play a dominant role in this Gehenna text. In the previous chapter we noted that the use of Gehenna in the Synoptics to denote the punishment of the wicked corresponds more to the book of Jeremiah than to contemporary usage. In addition to the allusion to Jeremiah, Mark 9:48 contains a direct quotation from Isaiah 66:24.

As the Jeremiah texts are discussed in the previous chapter, there is no need deal with them at length here. A brief summary will suffice. Jeremiah pictures an end-time battle in the valley of Ge-hinnom, where the apostates of Judah fall by the sword by the thousands. Their bodies fill the valley so that there is not enough manpower to bury them; they are left unburied to become the prey of the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. The destruction is accompanied by a fire that devours everything (see 31:40 - "valley of ashes"). The battle and ensuing slaughter are regarded as acts of God's judgement. While Jeremiah seems to picture a literal destruction within the geographical confines of Jerusalem, there are some linguistic elements that suggest the battle is a type of eschatological judgement.

In the last chapter Isaiah 66:24 is identified as one of the texts with strong similarities to Jeremiah's Ge-hinnom texts in picturing divine judgement in a valley – but unlike Jeremiah, Isaiah does not mention the valley by name. In the light of

[177] Sadler, 202.
[178] Henry, 2:419.

Mark's direct quotation of Isaiah 66:24, it is appropriate to examine Isaiah 66 in more detail.

Isaiah 66:1-24 is eschatological in nature. The unity of the chapter is a matter of debate among form critics who suggest it is a collection of independent sayings joined together by a redactor at a late date using phrases as "thus says the Lord".[179] I will, however, deal with the chapter as a unit on the basis that when Christian writers quoted or alluded to it, the chapter had already been circulating as a unified work for several centuries. Isaiah 66 deals primarily with the restoration of God's people centred on Jerusalem (66:8, 10, 13). This restoration will include not only the faithful of Israel, but also the nations. God will gather the nations to see his glory, and take them also for his people (66:18,21). This restoration will not be temporal. It will take place after the creation of "new heavens" and a "new earth" (66:23). In this respect, the eschatological element is much stronger in Isaiah 66 than in Jeremiah's Gehinnom texts.

Intertwined with images of salvation are strong elements of judgement. The Lord is in the holy temple about to bring recompense upon his enemies who appear, or are assumed to be, outside the city (66:4,24). While no battle is actually described, there are some vivid military images: in what is probably an ancient description of an epiphany,[180] the Lord is said to approach with fire and chariots that are as fast as the whirlwind (66:15) and to mete out justice by fire and the sword (66:16). The result is that all his enemies, "those who eat swine's flesh and rats and other abominations" (66:17), are slain. Their number is specifically said to be large. The language of epiphany and the mention of swine's flesh and rats could be a hint that the enemies of God who are slain are primarily Gentiles. However, the passage draws a clear distinction between Jews who are humble and poor and respect the law of God (66:2), and those who, while observing external rites, have in fact been doing evil (66:3-4). It is likely therefore that the main emphasis of the punishment includes both apostate Israelites and unbelieving Gentiles.

The language of Isaiah 66 depicts the punishment of God's enemies as resulting in death and annihilation. Isaiah, after describing God's epiphany, makes

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[179] Whybray, 279.

[180] Westermann, *Isaiah*, 104,421, compares the language of Is. 66:15,16 with other ancient epiphany texts like Judg. 5:4-5; Ps. 18:8-16; 114. Westermann describes epiphany as Yahweh's advent from afar to aid his chosen people and smite the oppressing enemy. Similarly, McKenzie, 208 draws a parallel with texts like Ps. 18:9 and Ez. 1:4,13,27 as evidence that in the Old Testament an epiphany is often accompanied by fire.

reference to the "slain of the Lord" (66:15-16) – an obvious reference to death. [181] The enemies of God "come to an end together" (66:17).[182] In 66:23, which depicts future bliss, all the remaining humans are righteous worshipers of God, while the wicked are nowhere to be found. Thus there is here no element of a place of torment for the wicked.

Verse 24, which is of immediate interest to our analysis of Mark 9:43-50, is best understood against the backdrop of the annihilation of God's enemies. It reads: "And they shall go forth and look on the dead bodies of the men that have rebelled against me; for their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence[183] to all flesh."[184] Pictured here is a sharp contrast between the fate of the righteous and that of the wicked. While the former are in Jerusalem, or at least free to make the pilgrimage there, enjoying the privilege of being in the presence of the Lord in his temple, the latter, having been slain in the battle with God, are left unburied to be eaten by maggots and burned in flames. They are said to be "an abhorrence" before all flesh.

The language of this text calls for comment. The idea of "going forth" to see a defeated enemy is common in ancient Hebrew writings. It is sometimes used in relation to an actual battle,[185] while at other times in poetic language as a hope of the eventual destruction of the enemies of God.[186] Fudge[187] suggests that Isaiah 66:24 might very well allude to the defeat of the large Assyrian army in the vicinity of

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[181] The motif of annihilation is stronger in some of the LXX manuscripts: In place of the usual κριθήσεται which appears before the "slain of the Lord" and refers to "judgement," A has καταναλωθήσονται ("consumed"), and 564 has καυθήσεται ([every flesh] "will be burned").

[182] Hebrew יספו. The LXX B has ἀναλωθήσονται, ("consumed") and A καταναλωθήσονται ("totally consumed"). Watts, 364, suggests that Is. 66:17 envisions a mass execution.

[183] LXX ὅρασιν , "spectacle" rather than "abhorrence". In later writings that associate Is. 66:24 with hell, the spectacle of the fate of the wicked is a source of satisfaction for the righteous (BW 1 En. 27:3; SE 1 En. 62:12; Jub. 23:30; Ap. Abr. 31:4). See Bauckham, *Fate*, 134-5.

[184] In Is. 66:24 LXX follows closely the Masoretic text. The Greek translators differed in the way they rendered the two Hebrew verbs תמות and תכבה – a difference discussed below. Symmachus retains a slightly different ending: καί ὄψονται τά ἔσχατα τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἀθετησάντων ἐν ἐμοί. It is not clear if ἔσχατα is to be understood as "the end" of the people who have rebelled against God. In such a case, the translator understood that תמות and תכבה do not indicate unending continuity and interpreted Is. 66:24 as implying annihilation in accordance with the earlier statements in Is. 66.

[185] E.g. Ex. 20:47-48 (the Egyptian army perishing in the Red Sea). For similar motifs in an eschatological setting, see the apocalyptic description of "seeing" the dead enemy after battle in Ez. 39:9-21, and the motif of the righteous stepping on the ashes of God's annihilated enemies in Mal. 4:1-3.

[186] E.g. Ps. 54:7; 58:10; 59:10; 91:8; 92:11; 112:8; 118:7.

[187] Fudge, "End," 329.

Jerusalem in the reign of king Hezekiah, with the dead Assyrian soldiers possibly being burned in a massive pyre in a valley outside the walls of the city.[188]

A more problematic element is the fire that "shall not be quenched". Claus Westermann maintains that while the traditions contained in Isaiah 66 picture the annihilation God's enemies in battle, verse 24 represents a later addition and the first instance where punishment is described not as annihilation, "but as an eternal state, perdition."[189] The evidence does not justify such a conclusion. Fudge, more correctly, demonstrates that the idea of an unquenchable fire as a means of divine punishment is common in the Hebrew writings.[190] It is used both in relation to eschatological punishment,[191] and, more commonly, to describe a temporal destruction.[192] In all cases the "unquenchable fire" is not of everlasting duration, but rather denotes the certainty and completeness of God's punishment.[193]

The word for "worm" (תולעתם) also adds to an understanding of this Isaiah text. According to Gesenius it refers to the worms that spring from putrefaction.[194] It appears again in Isaiah 50:9 where it is said that the dead will be eaten by the "worm". The "worm" is used together with פגרים, a common Hebrew word to denote "corpses".[195] The emerging picture is simple battle language - a battle in which the apostates of Judah are slain outside Jerusalem. There is no one to bury the dead so they are left exposed to be eaten by maggots and burned by fire.

The closing remark of Isaiah 66:24 is that the wicked will be "an abhorrence to all flesh". The Hebrew for "abhorrence" is דרעון, the strongest conceivable term to convey this meaning. Elsewhere in the Hebrew scriptures it appears only in Daniel

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[188] Is. 30:31-33.
[189] Westermann, *Isaiah*, 428.
[190] Fudge, "End," 329.
[191] E.g. Is. 34:10-11.
[192] Is. 1:31; Jer. 4:4; 7:20; 17:27; Ez. 20:47-48; Am. 5:5-6. Swete, *Mark*, 211, suggests that the idea of a fire not quenched goes back to the sanctuary cultus and the fire on the altar that according to Lev. 6:9 was to be kept constantly burning. This connection is noteworthy and could shed some light on Mk. 9:49 – admittedly one of the more difficult texts in the New Testament. If this connection is accepted, the element of time comes in since the fire on the altar was meant to burn constantly. Swete's suggestion adds an interesting angle to Is. 66:24, but the texts cited above about "unquenchable" fire carry more weight in an exegesis of Is. 66:24 because in common with Isaiah and in contrast to Lev. 6:9, they (a) are to be found in prophetic oracles, and (b) deal with God's judgement.
[193] In Isaiah 34 this is obvious from the fact that immediately after the mention of the fire that will not be quenched (34:10), wild animals roam the destroyed land (34:11). In the instances where the "unquenchable fire" is used in relation to temporal punishment, the fire can only be as temporal as the punishment. A typical example is the prophecy concerning the destruction of the gates of Jerusalem with "unquenchable fire" – a fire that could not but eventually go out (Jer. 17:27).
[194] Gesenius, 859; cf. Koehler and Baumgartner, 1702.
[195] פגר is used of both dead humans and dead animals. It also conveys the idea of absence of life as in Lev. 26:30 where it describes the lifelessness of the idols.

12:2. The reason why the slain wicked are said to be דרעון is not difficult to comprehend. In ancient Israel, as in the Near East in general, a proper burial was considered essential, preferably close to other deceased members of the family, or ancestors.[196] In contrast, not to bury the dead was a great dishonour.[197] Thus, in 2 Kings 9:10, it was prophesied through Elisha that Jezebel, because of her sins would not be buried when she died. Later, when her death is described at the hands of Jehu, Jehu remarks that despite her wickedness, the fact that she was the daughter of a king meant that she should get a burial (9:34). Nonetheless, the incident concludes by saying that when Jehu's soldiers actually did go to bury her, nothing was left of her body, because the dogs had eaten it, implying that Elisha's prophecy had unexpectedly been fulfilled. Such examples explain why the evil dead outside the gates of Jerusalem are abhorrence. Not only are they left unburied, but maggots eat their flesh and fire burns them away – a fate not unlike that of evil Jezebel.

It is evident therefore that the similarities between Isaiah 66 and the Ge-hinnom passages of Jeremiah are remarkable. Both depict a battle, both picture the death of the apostate Jews (and Gentiles in Isaiah) in this battle, both describe the dead being left unburied. In Jeremiah it is fire together with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air that devour the dead bodies. In Isaiah it is fire and maggots. Both motifs are meant to create a repulsive reaction among readers - in Jeremiah by the change of the name "Ge-hinnom" to "valley of Slaughter" and in Isaiah by the use of דרעון to describe the dead. The only divergence between the two traditions is that in Jeremiah the eschatological element is present but not prominent, whereas in Isaiah 66 it plays a much more central role.

There is evidence that Isaiah 66:24 played a strong influence on Jewish views of the judgement around the turn of the era. In Judith 16:17 the writer warns that the Lord will take vengeance on the nations that rise up against Israel. He will give "fire and worms" to their flesh.[198] In contrast to Isaiah 66:24 where the fire and the worms are agents of destruction, here they become agents of torment; the wicked shall "weep in pain forever" (Jdt. 16:17). Likewise Sirach 7:17 warns that the punishment of the

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[196] Gen. 25:9; 35:29; 47:29; and also Tob. 1:17-20. In certain cases, as for example with Samson and Saul (Judg. 16:31; 1 Sam. 31:11-13) people went even to the point of risking their lives to ensure that a deceased beloved person received an honorable burial. The reason why the wicked are said to be דרעון forever probably is because they never receive the honor of a decent burial. Cf. 2 Sam. 21 where even those executed could eventually receive a proper burial, in contrast to the wicked here.

[197] Eccl. 6:3,4.

[198] πῦρ καί σκώληκας εἰς σάρκας αὐτῶν.

ungodly will be "fire and worms". In contrast to Judith, Sirach does not clarify whether the punishment will result in destruction or prolonged torment. The Isaiah Targum oscillates between the two views. First the translator states that the breath of the wicked "will not die and their fire shall not be quenched" suggesting perhaps ongoing suffering. However, he adds that they will suffer only until the righteous say, "we have seen enough" (Is. Targ. 66:24).

Summing the above, Mark 9:43-50 shows the influence of two very similar biblical traditions – Jeremiah's Ge-hinnom texts and Isaiah 66:24. From the former Mark retains the name Gehenna, and from the latter some descriptive remarks.[199] Nothing in Mark's sources suggests torment by fire or other means of apostates for shorter or longer periods of time. Both envisage the complete destruction of the wicked. Nonetheless, Judith's use of Isaiah 66:24 does envisage ongoing torment, and so does, to some extent, the targum.

Observations on Mk 9:43-50

Having considered the question of the tradition-historical background, we find it useful now to consider Mark 9:43-50 itself.

To begin with, the writer uses three parallel expressions to explain what he perceives the judgement of God to involve. In 9:43 he mentions going to "Gehenna, to the unquenchable fire," in 9:45 simply Gehenna, and in 9:47-48, to "Gehenna of fire, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched." The phrase in 9:48 is a direct quotation from Isaiah 66:24, as already observed.

The two verbs that describe the worm and fire in 9:48, namely τελευτᾷ and σβέννυται, are revealing. The phrase in general, and these verbs in particular, are often assumed to deal with time,[200] i.e. "the worm will *never* die, and the fire will *never* go out." The grammatical structure however, while allowing this possibility, does not bear this emphasis. Τελευτᾷ is present indicative active. If the writer wanted to indicate unending activity, a future tense would have made more sense – οὐ τελευτήσει for example – "it will not die". Most of the Septuagint manuscripts of

[199] The term "Gehenna" appears in the Isaiah targum of 66:24, a fact that has prompted C.A.Evans (*Mark*, 72) to suggest that perhaps Jesus was aware of the Aramaic translation (though, of course, he is aware of the late date of the targum). The fact that the term "Gehenna" is rare in early but proliferates in late Jewish writings should perhaps suggest that its association with Is. 66:24 in the targum is likewise late.

[200] Lenski, *Mark*, 187.

Isaiah 66:24 have οὐ τελευτήσει with the exception of Codex Alexandrinus which has οὐ τελευτᾷ, and Mark's preference for the more ambiguous present indicative could suggest a deliberate attempt to adhere to Isaiah's Hebrew text where, as indicated above, the idea of everlasting duration either for the fire, or the worm, is simply not present.[201]

The second Greek verb is even more revealing. Σβέννυται like τελευτᾷ also appears in a present indicative rather than a future tense, as would preferably have been the case had the element of time been dominant in the text. Nonetheless, even if the implications of τελευτᾷ in relation to time are ambiguous, the picture seems clearer when it comes to the use of σβέννυται. Σβέννυται is a passive form from the root σβέννυμι, "to extinguish," or "to quench".[202] Thus the force of the passive form is that the fire "cannot be put out," obviously by a third party, rather than "it will never go out itself." The verb form thus has no bearing on how long the fire will burn, but rather on its intensity or nature so that no person or power will be able to stop it from doing its job. It refers to nature rather than duration. This is also the conclusion of H. B. Swete: "The presents οὐ τελευτᾷ [and] οὐ σβέννυται state simply the law or normal condition of the σκώληξ and πῦρ. The question of the eternity of punishment does not come into sight."[203]

The validity of this conclusion is further strengthened by the presence of another related word to describe the fire of Gehenna, namely, the adjective ἄσβεστον in 9:43. Ἄσβεστον is probably a redactional comment inserted by Mark for the sake of his Gentile readers.[204] Etymologically, it combines the negative prefix ἀ- and the verb σβέννυμι discussed above. It qualifies the nature of the πῦρ,

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[201] Strictly speaking Hebrew verbs do not deal with time but with aspect (Davidson, 81). That is not to say that temporality is absent, but rather that it is not the determinative element in discerning the meaning of a verb as is the case with English, Greek and other Indo-European languages. Thus, the *qal* imperfect (both תמות and תכבה in Is. 66:24 are *qal* imperfect) often translated as a future tense, only indicates that at this moment an activity is not yet complete. Mark's deliberate use of the Greek present therefore might suggest he was not only trying to preclude the idea of a fire that lasts forever (which is absent from his sources), but that he was also trying to retain the function of the verbs in Is. 66:24. Admittedly, the nature of the evidence that does not allow for watertight conclusions, and my view can only remain a suggestion.

[202] Moulton, *Lexicon*, 364.

[203] Swete, *Mark*, 212.

[204] Taylor, 412.

namely, that it cannot be put out by a third party.[205] It is thus a description of the nature of the fire without any reference to duration. The use of ἄσβεστον in other instances points in the same direction. The word occurs only twice again in the New Testament both times in the Synoptic gospels and both times in a Q tradition – in Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17. Both references appear in the context of divine judgement; the fate of the wicked is compared to the burning of chaff in πυρί ἀσβέστῳ ("unquenchable fire"). The fire that burns chaff is characterised by its intensity and short duration – chaff lights very quickly but is also consumed very quickly and the fire dies out.[206]

In light of the above, it is appropriate to conclude that the chief characteristic of the fire of Gehenna as described in Mark, is its intensity rather than its duration, and the fact that it cannot be stopped from doing its work. This seems to be the force of the adjective ἄσβεστον, the present passive οὐ σβέννυται, and possibly the present active οὐ τελευτᾷ.

A second element meriting comment is the emphasis that Mark 9:43-50 seems to place on the body. Three times within this passage it is said that it is better for a person to lose a part of the body, than for the whole body to go to Gehenna. As Scharen notes, entrance to Gehenna is with the whole body.[207] We meet similar language again in the two related Matthean texts - 5:29 and 18:8-9 – which reproduce this saying. It was already noted that the punishment of the body implies a resurrection of the body and a day of judgement.[208] The Gehenna saying of Mark 9 therefore presupposes the sequence death-bodily resurrection-judgement,[209] and W. Lane is thus correct to observe that the situation portrayed here is that of the final judgement.[210]

The words concerning maiming the body cannot be taken literally, as most scholars agree.[211] Jesus must certainly have known that it is not the hand or the foot

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[205] That ἄσβεστον does not deal with duration is even admitted by Cole, 153, who nonetheless proceeds to explain that everlasting torment is implied here.

[206] In the LXX ἄσβεστον appears only once in Job 20:26 in A and S. It is used with reference to the temporal death of the wicked as 20:7,8,9,11,16,24 indicate.

[207] Scharen, 333.

[208] See above, Chapter I.

[209] Scharen, 333. Cf. Mk. 12:18-27.

[210] Lane, 347.

[211] C.A. Evans, *Mark*, 71, calls the statements "grotesque recommendations" that are not to be taken literally. Witherington, 272, on the other hand, suggests that the cutting off of a hand or foot, or the plucking out of an eye, were punishments for such crimes as theft, runaway slaves and voyeurism

or the eye that sins. Sin begins rather with sinful thoughts in the mind.[212] F. Horst explains that it was not customary for Jews to refer to abstract activities, but to the specific member of the body involved.[213] On a similar note, H. Anderson has suggested that there was a tendency to associate different parts of the body with different kinds of temptations.[214] Such insights help understand the context in which this text was said, but even without them this saying makes perfect sense when we understand that the saying uses a hyperbole. In essence the saying communicates that if there is something in the life of the believer that distracts from the kingdom of God and causes sin, he or she should remove it or else it will grow and pollute the whole being of the person.[215]

As it stands, this language concerning the body is important in that it links the fate of a sinful limb that is cut and thrown away with the fate of the whole body of the sinner in Gehenna. When the body part in question sins, it is in danger of causing the rest of the body to follow suit. The advice is, therefore, to cut off the sinning hand or foot, or put out the sinning eye, so that the rest of the body, still undefiled, may enter the kingdom of God. If not, the whole body will be infected and suffer the fate that otherwise only the hand or foot or eye would suffer.

This concept of cutting off and throwing away the infected part is even stronger in Matthew's appropriation of the saying. In 5:29-30 and 18:8-9 Matthew uses derivatives of the verb βάλλω four times to describe both putting away of the sinful limb, and throwing away of the whole sinful body in Gehenna. The point to ponder here is that cutting off of a sinful limb is a representation of what will happen to the whole body unless steps are taken to protect it. What happens when a limb is useless or polluted and is cut off? It becomes even more useless. It is thrown away, buried, burned or whatever else, but it ceases to bother or concern the portion of the body that has remained alive. For all practical purposes, it ceases to exist.

The warning therefore seems to be that if a person allows the whole body to be infected (again a very literalistic picture and a hyperbole) then the whole body will become useless, even a dangerous pollutant. Being polluted and useless, it will be

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respectively. The point he sees in these sayings is that even such drastic remedies are better than sinning and going to hell.

[212] Cf. Mt. 5:28; 9:4; 12:34; 15:16-20; Mk., 7:21 on thoughts as a source of sin.

[213] Horst, TDNT, 4:560-1.

[214] H. Anderson, 238.

[215] Mt. 16:6-12; Mk. 8:15; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; Gal. 5:9.

thrown into Gehenna to suffer a fate similar to the fate a hand that has been cut off or an eye that has been taken out suffers - thrown away so that it will never again bother that which remains healthy.

A third element requiring comment is the contrast between the one who deals promptly with whatever causes him/her to stumble and the one who neglects to deal with the cause of sin. The former is twice said to enter "into life" and once to enter the "kingdom of God". The latter will inherit Gehenna with all its colourful descriptions discussed above. Thus the kingdom of God and life are set against Gehenna and the worm and the unquenchable fire.

This is a noteworthy contrast. The kingdom of God is one of the dominant themes of the Synoptic Gospels. One of its chief characteristics is both quantitative and qualitative life that is often described by the word αἰώνιος, itself a term that denotes both quantity and quality.[216] The Synoptics use several other phrases to describe the kingdom of God (or of heaven in Matthew). Thus we read that the righteous will shine like the sun (Mt. 13:43), and will sit on thrones as judges (Mt. 19:28). The great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be there, as will the prophets of old (Lk. 13:28). Righteousness will reign there (Mk. 12:34), and the righteous will have the opportunity to feast at the table of God (Mt. 22:2). Such is the bliss that will characterise the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the one who persists in sin will not inherit such a life, rich both in terms of quality and quantity. That one's lot will be with the dead corpses of Gehenna. E. P. Gould pointedly observes that the contrast between Gehenna and ζωή "would indicate that this is the meaning [death and destruction] of the figure here, rather than torment".[217] With this picture in mind, the contrast drawn in Mark 9:43-48 is most striking and functions as a strong literary device – wonderful bliss full of life on the one hand, a deserted valley full of stinking corpses eaten by maggots, where death reigns, on the other.

A final element to discuss is the bearing of 9:49-50 on the passage on Gehenna. 9:49-50 are without doubt some of the most difficult verses in the New Testament.[218] Their position vis-à-vis the Gehenna pericope of 9:43-48 is a matter of debate. Were these verses part of the original saying? Most commentators proceed to

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[216] For a discussion of αἰώνιος see the comments on Mt. 5:28-29 and 18:8-9 in the next chapter.
[217] Gould, 179.
[218] France, *Mark*, 379, calls 9:49 "impregnable" both for the ancients and for us.

deal with them as if they were. R. Cole professes ignorance on the question,[219] while W. Barclay regards them as three separate, independent sayings.[220] Strauss questioned the authenticity of their relation to the Gehenna pericope since the salt saying relates to the influence of true disciples in the world while Gehenna is about hell.[221] We will proceed to look at them as one unity with 43-48 as it is in this format that the evangelist presents the motif.

The meaning of vv. 49-50 and their contribution to the interpretation of the pericope is also a matter of debate. A.H. Meyer, for example, has listed fourteen possible interpretations for these verses and then added his own.[222] M. Lagrange has suggested that just as salt preserves food, the fire of Gehenna will not destroy but preserve sinners so that they burn eternally.[223] This suggestion sounds outrageous, especially in the light of what we have said above concerning the nature of Gehenna. By contrast, Gould has suggested that since fire is a destructive element and salt a purifier, the destructive fires of Gehenna function as a purifier to purify sinners in the manner in which salt purifies and preserves food.[224] He concludes therefore that everybody will be purified, either by persecution now, or by the fires of Gehenna eventually. V. Taylor rejects this view outrightly,[225] though many commentators would agree with Gould's one premise – namely that 9:49-50 constitute a reference to persecution.[226] Can we make any sense out of these two difficult verses?

9:49 reads in NA: "For every one will be salted with fire." 9:50 then concludes with a call to disciples to have salt in them. Salt and fire evoke imagery of temple sacrifices (Ezr. 6:9; 7:22; Ez. 43:24).[227] At some stage someone added to 9:49 the phrase "and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt," which eventually became part of the *textus receptus*.[228] The addition is drawn from Leviticus 2:13 where all

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[219] Cole, 153.
[220] Barclay, *Mark*, 239. Witherington, 272, calls the whole pericope rather crudely, a "grab bag or collection of assorted sayings of Jesus".
[221] Strauss, 338.
[222] Meyer, 153-155.
[223] Lagrange, 254.
[224] Gould, 181.
[225] Taylor, 413.
[226] Rawlinson, 131; C.H. Turner, 46.
[227] France, *Mark*, 383.
[228] A, C, K and other manuscripts add, "and every sacrifice will be salted with salt." Θ has "and every sacrifice will be consumed with fire" and Ψ "and every sacrifice will be consumed". The Latin manuscript it^k *omniaautem subastantia consumitur* ("and all there substance will be consumed"). Lohmeyer, 197, has shown a preference for this reading, tying it with 9:48 to read: "their worm shall not die, nor their fire be quenched, and all (their) substance shall be destroyed." This might be an

sacrifices were to be salted by the "salt of the covenant". This explanatory gloss may be an indication of how some early Christians understood this difficult text. Anderson may therefore be correct when he acknowledges that the reference to Leviticus is a gloss, but a useful one.[229] In Leviticus, the sacrifices offered by repentant sinners were burned on the altar after being salted with the salt of the covenant. There was a vicarious element in the sacrificial system - the covenant broken by the sinner requires his death, but an animal dies in his stead and thus the covenant is fulfilled vicariously.

In this respect, the fire of 9:48-49 represents the fire of God, which is upon all sin and consumes it.[230] 9:50 calls the disciples to have the salt of the covenant within them.[231] In this way, a person has a choice. Either he or she will have salt now and thus be in a covenant relationship with God, and willing to put away whatever may be a stumbling block - represented by the cutting and throwing away of "sinful limbs".[232] Or else, if he or she persists in allowing stumbling blocks in his/her life, the covenant represented by the salt will still be fulfilled on him but in the fire of Gehenna where he/she will be consumed like the sacrifices consumed on the altar. To use the words of Swete again, the Divine Fire either "consummates or consumes."[233] This would seem to be a valid conclusion and many commentators are ready to acknowledge that the fire destroying the wicked in 9:48 is the fire that purifies the saints in 9:49.[234]

Conclusion

This examination of Mark 9:43-50 brings to view several important observations. The first is the strong influence of biblical motifs. 9:43-48 reflects Old Testament traditions that pictured divine judgement taking the form of an eschatological battle between God and God's enemies in the environs of Jerusalem –

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interesting reading in the light of the conclusions I come to concerning the nature of Gehenna, but the textual evidence for it is weak. The problem in Mk. 9:49-50 is not textual, but exegetical.

[229] H. Anderson, 238.

[230] See Ps. 50:3; 97:3; Is. 66:15; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 10:27; 12:29 for a small sample of texts that refer to the wrath of God in terms of fire.

[231] France, *Mark*, 383, interprets the verse to mean that a disciple should be as dedicated to God's service as burned sacrifices were totally consumed by the fire. Witherington, 273, likewise sees a sense of absolute dedication and by reference to Rom. 12:1 notes that disciples should offer themselves as "living sacrifices". Cf. Pesch, *Markus*, 2:116, who relates to the new birth eperience.

[232] So C.A. Evans, *Mark*, 73, who aptly notes here a reference to the purification or purging process necessary to enter the kingdom. The fact that the salting is not done with salt but with fire introduces an eschatological element of purification (Mt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16; perhaps even Mal. 3:2-3 where the Lord's coming is compared to a refiner's fire). The purifying fire, however, is not the fire of Gehenna.

[233] Swete, *Mark*, 213.

[234] Barclay, *Mark*, 242; Lane, 349; C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 73; Johnson, *Luke*, 167.

a battle leading to the annihilation of the wicked and the triumph of God. Even though the battle language is missing from Mark 9:43-48, the direct quotation of Isaiah 66:24 and the concept of Gehenna from Jeremiah provide evidence for such influence. Unlike its sources, however, Mark 9 divests the eschatological punishment from the strict geographical locale outside Jerusalem, and Gehenna now ceases to be the name of a literal valley. Instead, it becomes a synonym for the place of divine punishment. Scriptural imagery can also be detected behind Mark 9:49-50 which is best understood against the background of the ancient Israelite sacrificial system and texts like Leviticus 2:13 that mention the "salt of the covenant". Such use of scripture suggests both a strong familiarity with and a deep respect for it.

The second observation is the presence of the body in judgement, which in turn is evidence of a death-bodily resurrection-judgement sequence permeating Mark's eschatological understanding. This sequence will become important as we examine Matthew's and Luke's Gehenna sayings. By comparing and contrasting their Gehenna texts in relation to their respective understandings of eschatological expectation, it will be possible to determine whether their use of Gehenna stems from a unified tradition as was suggested in the previous chapter.

A third and final observation is that the text of Mark 9:43-50 gives evidence to a belief in the final destruction/annihilation of the wicked rather than their everlasting torment as has often been supposed. We have seen that both Mark's scriptural sources, Jeremiah's Ge-hinnom passages and Isaiah 66, clearly envisage the death of the wicked in the eschatological battle with God. We also saw that even though the language in Mark is more indeterminate there is still good reason to suggest that Mark's Gehenna text points in the same direction, namely: (a) by the selection of the sources; (b) by the use of words like the adjective ἄσβεστον, the present passive of the verb σβέννυμι, and even the present indicative active τελευτᾷ all of which, to a greater or lesser extent indicate that the evangelist's purpose was to describe the nature of the eschatological fire of judgement rather than its duration; (c) by the comparison between the fate of a sinful limb cut and thrown away and the casting away of the body in Gehenna if no measures are taken to deal with the problem of sin; (d) by the deliberate juxtaposition between Gehenna and life; and (e) by the inclusion of the sayings of 9:49-50 which draw from the language of the sacrifices on the altar and the "salt of the covenant" and bring this language to bear on the motif of the final

judgement. It seems therefore that B. H. Branscombe's own conclusion is close to the mark: "There is no thought [in Mk. 9:43-50] of an eternal torture of human beings, neither is such a thought implied by the Isaiah citation of Mark."[235]

[235] Branscombe, 174.

Chapter III

Gehenna in Matthew's Markan Material

Mt. 5:29-30, 18:8-9

> Mt. 5:
> [29] "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into Gehenna.
> [30] "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than your whole body go into Gehenna."
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> Mt. 18:
> [8] "And if your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire.
> [9] "And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes be thrown into the Gehenna of fire."

Mark 9:43-50 is the earliest occurrence of the word "Gehenna" in the New Testament. Source-critically examined in the previous chapter, it is partially reproduced in Matthew 5:29-30 and 18:8-9. The admonitions to spiritual vigilance appear in similar format as in Mark 9:43-50, and the presence of the body in the judgement is a very prominent element, suggesting, as in Mark, judgement following a resurrection of the body.[236] There is however, a difference between the two gospels in the language used with respect to Gehenna. While Mark uses three different phrases to identify and describe Gehenna, Matthew leaves out Mark's quotation from Isaiah 66:24 and uses only two words/phrases to characterise Gehenna: γέενναν τοῦ πυρός ("Gehenna of fire") in 18:9 and τό πῦρ τό αἰώνιον ("the eternal fire") in 18:8.[237] The use of the word "fire" is hardly surprising since fire is a prominent element not only in Mark 9:43-50 and its tradition-historical background as

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[236] Gundry, *Matthew*, 89.
[237] "The eternal fire" here is probably a redaction of Mark's "unquenchable fire".

we have seen, but also in many eschatological motifs throughout the New Testament and extra-biblical Jewish writings.[238]

The word αἰώνιον, however, poses some exegetical problems and deserves further analysis.[239] Both its substantive root αἰών and especially the adjective αἰώνιος have attracted considerable scholarly attention and, in the case of the latter, opposing views in relation to the judgement of the wicked. Does αἰώνιος as a substantive for πῦρ suggest that Matthew envisaged a fire that would burn forever? Or does αἰώνιος have a less absolute sense without necessarily implying everlasting duration? Does αἰώνιος connote time? Or does it have other shades of meaning? In this chapter we will first look at the use of αἰών in ancient literature, with a special emphasis on the New Testament writers and the notion of two ages. Then we will look at αἰώνιος and will attempt to determine whether its usage in the New Testament follows the development of the use of αἰών and if so, what are the implications for Matthew's τό πῦρ τό αἰώνιον as a description of Gehenna.

Αἰών denotes a period of existence. In non-Jewish pre-Christian Greek it could denote the span of a lifetime, or a generation, or it could more widely refer to a long space of time, an "age" or "epoch".[240]

In the LXX αἰών corresponds to a number of Hebrew words. Most commonly, it renders the word עלם which denotes an unspecified period of time. In such instances αἰών closely corresponds to the meaning of עלם. A. Tomasino underlines the fact that עלם does not mean "eternity in the philosophical sense of the word". In most cases, as is the case with other Hebrew words that denote time, "the meaning of 'olam' is closely linked to the occurrence of events".[241] T. Holtz similarly points out that αἰών does not appear as an independent subject or object in the LXX and that the meaning "eternal" does not reside in the word itself. It assumes this meaning only from the context in which it is used.[242] Αἰών can therefore, when

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[238] Mt. 13:40; 25:41; Lk. 3:9; Jn. 15:6; Acts 2:19; 1 Cor. 3:13; 2 Thes. 1:8; 2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 17:16; 20:10,14; BW 1 En. 10:6; 14:12,17; 21:7; 18:11; Jdt. 16:17; Sir. 7:17; T. Jud. 25:3; 2 Bar. 44:15.
[239] The word αἰώνιος is twice more used in Matthew for eschatological punishment (25:41,46).
[240] See Liddell, and Scott, 45 for a list of references to ancient writers.
[241] Tomasino, 3:346.
[242] Holtz, EDNT, 1:44ff.

ascribed to God, be used to mean everlasting duration.[243] But it also describes words or situations of a temporary nature that last a very short time.[244] It can refer to the remote past or the distant future but most often within the context of history thus precluding the idea of everlasting duration.[245]

Around the turn of the era evidence begins to build that beyond its common meaning, αἰών came to designate what was conceived as the two ages in God's plan for humanity: "this αἰών" as a description of the present, imperfect and temporal order of things, and the "coming αἰών" as the permanent and perfect order to be established in the eschatological future. This development can be discerned in several early Jewish writings. Sirach 43:7 refers to the "consummation of the [present] age";[246] the Assumption of Moses 12:4, to the "end of the age";[247] and Tobit 14:5, to the time "till the times of the ages are fulfilled".[248] The concept of the two ages, however, finds its fuller manifestation in later works such as the Enochic Similitudes, 2 Enoch, 2 Baruch, Pirqe Aboth, and especially 4 Ezra[249] in the late first to early second centuries AD and beyond.[250]

Turning to the New Testament, one finds ample evidence for the two-age idea not only in existence in the early Christian community, but also as a prominent theme. In the Synoptics αἰών occurs nineteen times. In thirteen of these the theology of the two ages is either clearly evident or implied.[251] In Matthew 12:32, for example, both the present and the future ages are mentioned.[252] In Mark 10:30 and Luke 18:30, the present age is implied and the future specifically mentioned. The idea finds further development in Luke 20:34-35, where life in the coming age is described with detail.

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[243] E.g. Ex. 15:18; Dt. 32:40.

[244] In Ex. 21:6 αἰών refers to a "lifetime"; in 1 Sam. 1:22, to the lifetime of service of the prophet Samuel in the sanctuary; in Lev. 3:17 to the priest's office; in Joshua 8:28 to the burning of Ai. Cf. Ex. 32:13, Dt. 5:29; 12:25,28; 1 Sam. 2:30; 3:13,14; Is. 17:2. Αἰών and αἰώνιος are actually more often used with regards to time with a limit than to time without end.

[245] Cf. Gen. 6:4; Dt. 32:7.

[246] S has Συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος.

[247] *Exitus saeculi.*

[248] B and A - ἕως πληρωθῶσιν καιροί αἰῶνος.

[249] SE 1 En. 48:7; 71:15; Slav. 1 En. 42:3; 50:2; 66:6-7; 2 Bar. 54:21; 69:4; 83:7; Ab. 2:7 and 4 Ez. 4:2; 6:25; 7:112-3; 8:1; 9:19; 14:11. For a fuller discussion and references see Sasse, TDNT, 1:197-209.

[250] Cf. Ferch, 135-151.

[251] Mt. 12:32; 13:22,39,40,49; 24:3; 28:20; Mk. 4:19; 10:30; Lk. 16:8; 18:30; 20:34,35. In six cases (Mt. 21:19; Mk. 3:29; 11:14; Lk. 1:33,55,70) αἰών is used as in the LXX to denote a long period of time either past or future.

[252] The use of αἰών with μέλλων probably reflects the Greek of Is. 9:5, the only instance in the LXX where there is a direct reference to the "coming age".

In texts like Matthew 13:22, 13:39, Mark 4:19 and Luke 16:8 αἰῶν denotes the present, temporal order of things. It is noteworthy that of the three Synoptics, Matthew is the one most familiar with the two-age concept. Of the eight occurrences of αἰῶν, seven can best be understood within this framework.[253]

The Pauline literature shows an equally strong familiarity with the concept. In Romans 12:2, the apostle admonishes his readers not to conform to "this age". The usage of the word "this" (τοῦτο) as a reference to the present order or age implies that Paul assumes another "age". 1 Corinthians 2:6, 8 makes reference to the "rulers" (ἄρχοντες) of this age. Ephesians 1:21 contrasts the present and the future ages. In Ephesians 2:7 there is mention of the coming "ages" in the plural and in 2:2, of the present age and its leaders. 1 Timothy 6:17 refers to the "present age" (νῦν αἰῶνι) implying therefore that there is another one in the future.

In the Johannine writings, the usage of the word αἰῶν does not provide unambiguous evidence for a two-age theology. Nonetheless, a closer look at the way the phrase αἰώνιος ζωή is used (which I will discuss shortly), indicates that the writer was aware of the concept, or at least, in his usage of αἰώνιος went beyond the quantitative quality of the word.

Having looked at the use of αἰῶν, we may turn now our attention to the adjective αἰώνιος as it primarily interests us in relation to the usage of Gehenna in Matthew. In non-Jewish pre-Christian Greek and in the LXX, αἰώνιος generally corresponds in meaning to the substantive αἰῶν. When it comes to New Testament Greek however, opinions are divided. Some scholars argue that αἰώνιος simply carries over its classical meaning indicating perpetuity, or at least, a long time span. E. Burton, for example, insists that the force of the adjective is always purely temporal and quantitative. It bears no relation to ages – this age and the age to come. Burton argues that the adjective was in use before the theological concept of two ages developed and that therefore it kept its original meaning.[254] Similarly, W. G. T.

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[253] Mt. 12:32; 13:22,39,40,49; 21:19; 24:3; 28:20. The only instance where Matthew uses αἰώνιος without denoting one of the two ages is in 21:19, (the curse on a barren fig tree). In contrast to Matthew, Mark uses αἰών four times (Mk. 3:29; 4:19; 10:30; 11:14) of which only two are references to the two ages (Mk. 4:19; 10:30). In Luke the numbers are seven (Lk. 1:33,55,70; 16:8; 18:30; 20:34,35) and four references (Lk. 16:8; 18:30; 20:34,35) respectively.

[254] Burton, 344,432.

Shedd maintained a century ago that the terms denote time only.[255] J. E. Braun, has called the suggestion that αἰών can have a meaning other than eternity as "wishful thinking".[256] R. A. Morey likewise holds that αἰώνιος primarily deals with time though he is more cautious than Braun in arguing that αἰώνιος has the meaning of absolute endlessness mainly when it refers to the final state of things in the age to come.[257]

In contrast to the above assertions, a growing number of commentators are convinced that the adjective αἰώνιος conveys a more varied meaning. While it may have referred to long periods of time, in many instances in the New Testament it has been influenced by the theology of the two ages and therefore has come to mean, "pertaining to the age to come". In such usages, the quantitative aspect recedes into the background and the word takes on a strongly qualitative colour. N. Turner believes that most New Testament usages fall under this category, except where αἰώνιος is used of the past.[258] D. Hill reaches similar conclusions by comparing some usages of ζωή αἰώνιος in John with related rabbinical sayings (of uncertain age admittedly) that clearly refer to the coming age.[259] Such suggestions seem plausible in the light of the prominence of the two-age theology in the New Testament, including the Synoptics. In order, however, to verify the validity of these suggestions, it is imperative that we examine how αἰώνιος is used in the New Testament. Before focusing on Matthew we will first look at how the word is used elsewhere.

Outside Matthew αἰώνιος is used 65 times in the New Testament.[260] Of these, 40 instances describe the noun ζωή ("life"), with the gospel of John and 1 John showing special preference for this combination (17 and 6 occurrences respectively). Twenty-one times the adjective describes words like "fire" (Jude 7), sin (Mk.3:29), places of habitation (Lk.16:9; 2 Cor.5:1), and several other nouns. In four instances the word is used to describe long periods of time in the past.[261] Once it is used with

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[255] Shedd, 87.
[256] Braun, 162.
[257] Morey, 150.
[258] N. Turner, 456.
[259] Hill, *Words*, 187,188.
[260] 44 times plus once in the short ending of Mark.
[261] Rom. 16:25,26; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2.

reference to the run-away slave Onesimus being restored to his master, and appears to have a purely quantitative but temporary meaning. [262]

An examination of αἰώνιος in combination with nouns other than "life" suggests that the meaning "pertaining to the age to come" fits much better than strictly "perpetual" or "everlasting". In Mark 3:29, for example, we read of an αἰώνιον ἁμάρτημα ("an *aionian* sin"). It is hardly possible to translate it as "everlasting" or "perpetual sin" in a quantitative sense, for the deed in question is specifically said to be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit - a specific act, or at least attitude that certainly does not last for eternity.

In the short ending of the gospel of Mark (16:8) and also in Hebrews 5:9 we have the phrase σωτηρίας αἰωνίου ("aionian salvation"), in Hebrews 9:12 αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν ("aionian redemption"), in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον ("aionian destruction"), in 2 Thessalonians 2:16 παράκλησιν αἰωνίαν ("aionian consolation"), in Hebrews 6:2 κρίματος αἰωνίου ("aionian judgement"), in Hebrews 9:15 αἰωνίου κληρονομίας ("aionian inheritance") and in Revelation 14:6 εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον ("aionian gospel"). In all these cases rendering of αἰώνιος with "everlasting" or "perpetual" or "of long duration" hardly seems valid. Salvation and redemption are associated by both Mark and the author of Hebrews with the person and death of Jesus Christ and, in the life of the individual, with a decision and baptism – not with a perpetual process that could in any way justify the use of αἰώνιος in a quantitative sense.[263] The "aionian destruction" of 2 Thessalonians can only mean "a destruction of the coming age" – i.e. a complete destruction – since ὄλεθρος is a reference to the final death of the wicked in the judgement.[264] The "aionian consolation" is again to be understood as a consolation of coming-age quality, since it is used together with the word "hope" (ἐλπίς) in the context of the believer's temporal life and could thus not mean "everlasting". The same can be said of the "aionian judgement" of Hebrews 6:2, which is not an everlasting process but rather an event immediately after the

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[262] Philemon 15.
[263] E.g. Mk. 16:16; Heb. 2:1-4,9,14-15; 3:6-8.
[264] See the brief discussion of ὄλεθρος in Chapter V.

resurrection of the dead.[265] The "aionian gospel" which is proclaimed by an angel flying in the midst of heaven is "the gospel concerning the age to come" in a qualitative sense.[266] This is indicated by the fact that in the context of Revelation 14 it is specifically timed to prepare for the coming judgement. Likewise, the "aionian inheritance" of Hebrews 9:15 can be better understood as a qualitative reference to what God has prepared.[267]

Perhaps the most clear qualitative use of the adjective αἰώνιος is found in Jude 7 where the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorra is described with the genitive phrase πυρός αἰωνίου ("aionian fire"). Jude 7 takes on an added importance because in essence it is exactly the same saying as Matthew's τό πῦρ τό αἰώνιον. The writer of Jude, who seems to have been well versed in Jewish writings, may have been aware that according to the Genesis account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra, the fire barely lasted a few hours. Lot and his family escaped late at night from the doomed cities and, shortly after the sun rose, the only thing left was the smoke (Gen. 19:1-27).[268] It would be completely inappropriate to use αἰώνιος in a quantitative sense to describe something that lasted for such a short time. It is much more plausible to assume that for the writer of Jude the fire was "aionian" in a qualitative sense – a fire that came directly from God, a punishment characteristic in its thoroughness, of the quality of the age to come. It is therefore clear that at least in many cases, αἰώνιος cannot be taken to imply "eternity" or "of long duration" in a quantitative sense; rather "pertaining to the age to come" is a much more valid rendering.

The use of the phrase ζωή αἰώνιος ("aionian life") further verifies this point. On its own this locus can have either a quantitative or a qualitative meaning. The second option is however to be preferred in several texts. In many of the occurrences

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[265] Heb. 6:2 reads: ἀναστάσεώς τε καί κρίματος αἰωνίου; cf. 1:11; 6:4-8; 9:27.

[266] Aune, 826 comments: εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον in Rev. 14:6 "refers to the permanent validity of its proclamation". Swete, *Revelation*, 182: "a gospel belonging to, stretching forward to, the eternal order".

[267] Buchanan, 150, renders 9:15 as "the inheritance of the age". Cf. Heb. 3:1.

[268] Bauckham, *Jude*, 55, maintains that the "still burning fire" that destroyed Sodom and the surrounding cities was for Jude an example of the eternal fires of hell. Cf. Sidebottom, 87, who argues that there was a belief that the cities continued to burn underground. Contrary to Bauckham and Sidebottom, Jewish sources upheld the short duration of the destroying fires (Wis. 10:7; Jos. *Wars*, iv.8.3; *Neof.* Gen. 19:25-6,29; *Ps. Jon.* Gen. 19:25-9; Jub. 16:5-6). It was the desolation of the plain of Sodom that endured, not the fires.

outside Matthew, "aionian life" refers to a present reality in the believer's life.[269] It is much easier to assume that the quality of the life of the age to come has dawned in the life of the believer than to argue that the believer has begun to live perpetually. Furthermore, in John 17:3 the author explains that eternal life is knowledge of the only true God and of the one God has sent – Jesus Christ. In 1 John 1:2 and 5:20 a similar thought is expressed: Jesus becomes a personification of everything that eternal life stands for. These occurrences seem to favour a qualitative meaning, for knowledge of God or Jesus Christ brings a quality of life not found in this age. Finally, in Mark 10:30 (cf. Lk.18:30) seems to link directly the concepts of "eternal life" and the "age to come".

It is therefore likely that in the New Testament the adjective αἰώνιος, on many occasions goes beyond the quantitative sense "a period of time" to imply a quality to be associated with the age to come - the age that God will set up. Now we may look more closely at Matthew.

In Matthew αἰώνιος appears six times.[270] Three times it describes life (ζωή) that the faithful will inherit,[271] twice the fire of the day of judgement[272] and once the verdict of the judgement.[273] The context of these usages does not make it clear if αἰώνιος is to be understood in a qualitative or a quantitative way. However, it was observed above that Matthew more than any other New Testament writer, was aware of and made use of the two-age theology. In light of the use of αἰώνιος by other New Testament writers and Matthew's even greater attention to the two-age theology, it is logical to infer that the phrase τό πῦρ τό αἰώνιον of Matthew 18:8 in relation to Gehenna is a fire that does not last forever, or even for a long time, but rather a fire of the quality of the coming age. This is the conclusion to which a considerable number of commentators have arrived in the past few decades. W. Barclay for example, writes that a "punishment which is αἰώνιος is [a] punishment which it befits God to give" rather than an everlasting one.[274] R. V. G. Tasker came to a

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[269] Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 5:39; 6:47; 6:54; 17:3; 1 Jn. 3:15; 5:11,13.
[270] Mt. 18:8 is the text under consideration. The text is from Mk. 9:43, where αἰώνιος is absent. Mt. 19:16 and 29 are also from Mark and αἰώνιος is used with the noun "life". Mt. 25:41 and 46 (twice), are from Matthew's special source. Matthew is the only Synoptic gospel that uses αἰώνιος in relation to judgement.
[271] Mt. 19:16,29; 25:46.
[272] Mt. 18:8; 25:41.
[273] Mt. 25:46.
[274] Barclay, 201.

similar conclusion when he wrote that αἰώνιος is a "qualitative rather than a quantitative word" and its use is "no indication as to how long that punishment will last". He adds that this seems to be especially so since Matthew, in speaking of an "aionian fire", envisaged a literal rather than a metaphorical fire,[275] as the dominant presence of the body indicates. Likewise, H. B. Green writes that the thought behind the phrase "aionian fire" is "of irrevocable condemnation rather than continuous torment".[276]

Having thus ascertained the qualitative use of αἰώνιος in the New Testament in general and in Matthew in particular, it is important to note that the word cannot be completely divested of its quantitative quality. To do so would actually mean to divest the word of its coming-age quality, since one of the chief characteristics of the age to come is its permanence.

In the Pauline literature, this contrast between the temporary nature of this age and the permanence of the coming one is further accentuated. The present age is described with the word πρόσκαιρος, which literally means "for a time". When αἰώνιος is thus used in contrast to πρόσκαιρος, it must retain at least in part its quantitative nature irrespective of the coming-age qualities with which it has been associated. Good exegesis would thus require that we treat αἰώνιος as a loaded word – it refers primarily to things that pertain to the coming age thus having a qualitative emphasis, while at the same time its quantitative nature is enhanced by the very permanence of the coming order.

Conclusion

With this understanding, eternal life would be the life that is of the coming age in quality and yet one which by the very nature of the coming age conveys a certain permanence. The eternal gospel would be concerned with the coming age, and though it is not preached in perpetuity, there is a certain finality in its impact both for those who accept it and reject it. The eternal destruction would be one of age-to-come quality – administered by God – and though the act of judging cannot last forever, its verdict is final and irreversible.

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[275] Tasker, 240.
[276] Green, 207.

The same would be the meaning of the eternal fire of Matthew 18:8 – a fire that is aionian in quality in that it comes from God, as is the case with Jude 7, and that nothing can stop from doing its work. While the fire itself may not be everlasting, there is a certain finality about it. It results in complete, irreversible destruction, as did the fire of Sodom and Gomorra that destroyed the two cities thoroughly. To the extent that this conclusion is credible, then the eternal fire of Matthew 18 may be said to correspond closely in meaning to the nature of the fire as described in Mark 9:43-50. This suggests that while Mark and Matthew used different phraseology, there is remarkable consistency in their picture of Gehenna and their views on the punishment of the wicked.

Chapter IV

Gehenna in Matthew's Q

Matthew 10:28

> "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell [Gehenna]."

Having looked at Mark 9:43-50 and the parallel texts in Matthew 5:29-30 and 18:8-9, we now turn to Matthew 10:28, a Q text.[277] It is admittedly one of the most important Gehenna texts both in Matthew in particular and in the Synoptics in general because it contains possibly the most complete description of what the evangelist expected Gehenna to be. In this chapter therefore I will first briefly offer some redaction critical considerations, and then proceed to examine in more detail the eschatological expectations of the evangelist as presented in this text.

Matthew 10:28 and its immediate context 10:26-33 derive from Q and correspond to Luke 12:4-5 and 12:2-9 respectively. W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann suggest that while there is some agreement in language between Matthew and Luke, the notable differences and the different literary settings within which the material is placed suggests that the two writers used different sources.[278] It is true that there is some difference in language[279] especially in the two parallel verses on Gehenna.[280] The similarities in language, however, are strong and it seems likely that both evangelists drew from the same source, or at least from slight variants of the same source.[281]

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[277] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 89.

[278] Albright and Mann, 128. One of the difficulties of the two-document hypothesis is the considerable difference in wording between Matthew and Luke in some of the Q passages. It is therefore not unlikely that different versions of Q were around as Albright and Mann suggest. Morris, *Matthew*, 15-17, draws attention to Luke 1:1 and suggests that there might have been multiple sources on the life of Jesus in circulation at the time when Luke and Matthew were written. Cf. Plummer, 154, Tresmontant, 349.

[279] Of 31 words in the saying in Luke 12:4-5, Matthew 10:28 shares 11.

[280] On the differences cf. the treatment of Luke 12:4-5 below in Chapter V.

[281] Allison and Davies, 2:201-207, maintain that Mt. 10:26-31 is a block from Q and that Luke used Matthew's text though they admit that apparently Luke in some instances follows Q more closely. They also note overlap with Markan material in Mt. 10:26/Lk. 12:2 and Mk. 4:22. Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 196-198.

From a redactional point of view, it is difficult to draw watertight conclusions about Matthew's editorial contributions. Opinions vary.[282] Gundry maintains that both here and elsewhere, Luke most often preserves the Greek Q wording better than Matthew.[283] A. Stock similarly holds that Luke's version of this saying is older.[284] D. Harrington likewise argues that Matthew in general is freer than Luke in his use of Q, especially in speeches.[285] On the other hand, A. J. McNicol suggests that Luke used and edited the text of Matthew.[286] B. Crockett and E. Schweizer argue that in this Q text Luke does preserve a more original version but has removed the important word "soul".[287] In general, a comparison between Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4 shows that Matthew has a much simpler and more straightforward construction, despite some hermeneutical questions about the meaning of the phrase "will destroy both soul and body in Gehenna". By contrast, Luke's construction is harder to understand. This may indicate that Luke retains a more original version and that Matthew tried to smooth out the meaning of the verse by adding the word "soul" and changing the syntax. I would thus be in favour of the view that Matthew's "but cannot kill the soul" is redactional of Luke's "have no more than they can do," and that Matthew's "who can destroy both soul and body" is also redactional in place of Luke's "after he has killed has power to cast into Gehenna". Both these editorial adjustments serve the purpose of clarifying the meaning of an obscure saying.

Matthew 10:28 is placed within the context of a prolonged discourse by Jesus to his disciples. He is about to send them out in pairs to preach in the towns and villages of the "house of Israel". He warns them that since they will likely face persecution, they should not fear human enemies because they cannot cause real harm (10:26,28). They may kill the body, but believers have the hope of the resurrection. The disciples should rather fear "him who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna".

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[282] Perhaps here a cautionary note is on order. Patte, 12, notes it is not so important to try to discover the evangelist's sources and his redactional work, because once he has selected a specific text for inclusion, this itself is a work of redaction. Thus, no matter where Matthew drew his material from, it is all his work. There is a lot of truth in this view. Nonetheless, if we can discover where the author altered or worked upon his sources, especially in comparison with a similar tradition in another gospel, we may gain clearer insight into his thinking and aims.

[283] Gundry, *Matthew,* xiv.

[284] Stock, 172.

[285] Harrington, *Matthew*, 7.

[286] McNicol, 134.

[287] Crockett, 132; Schweizer, *Matthew,* 246.

At this point, several observations need to be made on Matthew 10:28. First, the "one" who is able to destroy "both soul and body" is definitely God. Attempts have been made from time to time by some scholars to argue that the one who destroys is the devil rather than God.[288] However, such a view is untenable. Nowhere in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are believers ever called upon to fear the devil. Rather they are to resist him and he will flee.[289] On the contrary, in many cases the faithful are called to fear God.[290] As Hill rightly notes, while Satan has some power (Mt. 6:13; 24:22), it is the Son of Man who has the power to condemn (Mt. 25:31-46).[291] Gundry adds to the argument James 4:12, which indicates that God is the only one who has power to destroy and thus needs to be feared.[292] A. Plummer points out that within the context of Matthew 10, verses 29-31 confirm that God is the judge by declaring that nothing happens without God's consent, and that verses 32-33 declare that Christ and God the Father will preside in the final judgement.[293] Finally, in all the Synoptic passages that depict an eschatological judgement, God is the one who judges.[294]

A second observation on Matthew 10:28 would be that the judgement described in this passage where "body and soul are destroyed" presupposes resurrection that involves the wicked as well as the righteous. One of the notable characteristics of most of the Gehenna passages is the prominent role that the body plays. This is certainly the case in Mark 9:43-48 and the related texts in Matthew 5:29 and 18:8-9, where references to the body are taken almost to the extreme. The body plays a less prominent role in the remaining Gehenna occurrences, but it is not absent.[295] An eschatological judgement of the body requires by definition a bodily regeneration for the dead. The Gehenna judgement scene of Matthew 10:28 must be interpreted within this context.

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[288] Stendahl, 783; Lampe, 834; Grundmann, 297.
[289] E.g. Zach. 3:1; Mt. 4:10; 16:23; Lk. 4:13; Eph. 4:27; 6:11, Jam. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8.
[290] Ps. 19:9; 111:5; Prov. 9:10; Eccl. 12:13; Rev. 14:7; 15:4; Wisd. 16:13; 2 Mac. 6:26; 4 Mac. 13:14.
[291] Hill, *Matthew*, 193.
[292] Gundry, *Matthew*, 197.
[293] Plummer, 155.
[294] E.g. Mt. 3:10-12; 10:32-33; 11:20-27; 13:37-43; Mk 12:1-12; Lk. 12:41-48.
[295] Milikowsky, 238-249, has argued that the Gehenna judgement of Luke 12:4 deals only with the soul and as such contrasts with the corporeal language of Mark and Matthew. For a critical evaluation of his arguments, see my comments below on Lk. 12:4. For evidence of a belief in a bodily resurrection and a day of judgement in Matthew see Mt. 12:38-42; 22:23-32, also 10:8; 11:5; and 27:52 where bodily resurrections are evidence of the approaching kingdom, that Jesus is the coming one, and that Jesus' resurrection is paradigmatic for the resurrection of all believers, respectively.

A third point is that not put much emphasis should be placed on the apparent distinction between body and soul expressed in the phrase "do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul". While it is beyond the scope here to examine the usage of the word ψυχή in the Synoptics, there remains a danger in understanding this phrase in light of the belief in the immortal soul.[296] Such a belief found its way into Judaism primarily through Hellenistic influence[297] and gained some prominence by the first century of this era.[298] Many, however, are convinced that the use of ψυχή in Matthew 10:28 does not reflect such a dichotomic anthropological understanding.[299] Thus, McNeile explains that ψυχή in the gospels in refers to (a) the principle of life, (b) the seat of thoughts and feelings or (c) what comprises all that makes up real self.[300] B. Green expresses surprise about the apparent distinction in the light of Matthew's Jewish background, especially since Luke avoids language that could imply any such distinction.[301] R. T. France is probably correct in noting that the purpose of Matthew is not to separate body from soul but to show that being human involves more than an animal existence. Body and soul should not be seen as separate but comprise the whole person; thus the saying emphasizes the totality of the final destruction in hell.[302] F. Filson holds that "soul" in this case refers to a person's true self.[303] C. Blaine suggests that ψυχή refers to the person in Matthew 10:25 and to everlasting life in 10:28.[304] E. Schweizer cautions that if here we indeed have evidence of Hellenistic influence,[305] it is undermined by the statement immediately

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[296] So Gundry, *Matthew*, 197.

[297] Gundry, *Soma,* 117-135, has argued that the dichotomy between immortal soul and mortal body is rooted in the Hebrew scriptures. However, his view has few supporters and it is generally agreed that in Hebrew thought a person was a unity. Cf. Jacob, TDNT, 9:617-31.

[298] Notably, Wis. Sol. (3:2,4; 4:19; 8:20), Ps. Phoc. (ll. 111-112; 107-108), and especially Philo (*Opif.* 135). Other writings, like some of the Sibylline Oracles (1:9; 3:1-2,761; 4:176,178) or Ps. Sol. (2:31; 3:12), maintain the traditional Hebrew belief in the mortality of both body and soul. For a general discussion see Porteous, IDB, 4:428-9, and the relevant articles in by Jacob, Dihle, Lohse and Schweizer in TDNT, 9:609-660.

[299] Davies and Allison, 2:206, emphatically state that ψυχή here refers to "the disembodied 'soul' which can survive the bodily death" (cf. Scharen, 458-9). Godet, 2:91, stated more than a century ago: "This saying of Jesus distinguishes soul from body as emphatically as modern spiritualism." These suggestions are negated by Mt. 10:28b which states that the "soul" can be killed and Mt. 10:39 within the same pericope, where ψυχή has the meaning "life" as there is a reference to losing and gaining it in the context of persecution.

[300] McNeile, 145.

[301] Green, 112.

[302] France, *Matthew*, 186.

[303] Filson, 132, 133.

[304] Blaine, 107.

[305] Many writers have no problem with a body/soul dichotomy in Matthew; so e.g. Harrington, *Matthew*, 153, (on Mt. 10:28) and Gundry, *Matthew*, 197. While this is true in some cases, there is a

following, namely, that both body and soul can be killed in Gehenna. He maintains that ψυχή should, as a rule, be translated "life" and the phrase here would thus be "body and life" indicating two aspects of a person rather than two distinct parts. The meaning would then be that humans cannot kill "life itself, real life, but God can".[306]

The point in Matthew 10:28 meriting most discussion is the light it sheds on Gehenna – in Gehenna God can destroy both body and soul. The Greek word for "destroy" is ἀπολέσαι, aorist infinitive of the verb ἀπόλλυμι. This verb frequently occurs in both the New Testament (90 times), and also in the LXX. The related noun ἀπώλεια is rather more rare.[307] Ἀπόλλυμι is a stronger form of ὄλλυμι and has the meaning "to destroy utterly", "to kill", "to bring to naught", "to make void," "to lose," "to be deprived off".[308] A. Kretzer points out that in secular Greek ὄλλυμι is found only in epic poetry, frequently in relation to violence; both verbs express loss, destruction, and annihilation, which can extend to the final destruction of a person in death.[309] Liddell and Scott add that, at least in Homer, it refers mostly to death in battle.[310] In the LXX ἀπόλλυμι corresponds to 38 Hebrew words, though most commonly it translates the word אבד. It is used in relation to the destruction of individuals, cities, groups of people or whole tribes and nations without eschatological connotations. With respect to early Christian usage, A. Oepke states that it has a fourfold meaning: (a) "to destroy," or "to kill"; (b) "to lose," or "suffer loss from"; (c) "to perish"; and (d) "to be lost". Usages (b) and (d) would pertain more to things of this world, while usages (a) and (c) to the next world.[311]

Many commentators agree that in Matthew 10:28 ἀπολέσαι should simply be translated "destroy". Davies and Allison admit that the annihilation of body and soul is here expressed, though they are of the opinion that Matthew in general had in mind the eternal torment of the wicked.[312] W. C. Allen similarly points out that in apocalyptic and rabbinical writings both the concepts of annihilation and eternal

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sharp distinction between the traditional Jewish and the Hellenistic understanding of ψυχή and Mt. 10:28 falls under the former category. Mt. 10:28b leaves no doubt about this.

[306] Schweizer, *Matthew*, 246.

[307] 18 times in the New Testament and 108 in the LXX.

[308] Moulton, *Lexicon*, 45.

[309] Kretzer, EDNT, 1:135-6.

[310] Liddell and Scott, 1216-7.

[311] Oepke, TDNT, 1:394-396.

[312] Davies and Allison, 2:205-207.

torment can be found.[313] W. Barclay suggests that Matthew 10:28 teaches conditional immortality, and that the sinner's soul goes down until it is finally "obliterated, extinguished and annihilated, and ceases to be."[314]

Others would argue that though "destruction" is the most appropriate translation for ἀπολέσαι, it does not mean annihilation. Oepke, for example, maintains that the word "destruction" is not used in the sense of merely the extinction of physical existence, but rather refers to "an eternal plunge into Hades."[315] Similarly, W. E. Vine suggests that the idea behind ἀπόλλυμι is "not of extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well being."[316] A.T. Robertson writes that "to destroy" in this case means not annihilation but eternal punishment in Gehenna.[317] J. Broadus argues that Matthew avoids the use of the word "kill" (ἀποκτείνω) in 10:28b and thinks the verse implies the destruction of all that makes for a rich and meaningful life.[318] Scharen, on the other hand, maintains that in the active voice ἀπόλλυμι is almost a synonym for ἀποκτείνω, but that somehow here it should not be understood as referring to destruction.[319] Schweizer leaves the matter open and states that it is not clear whether Matthew is speaking of an end to unrepentant sinners or simply of eternal torment.[320] He appeals to a rabbinical view that the wicked would be destroyed completely after twelve months in Gehenna.[321]

It appears that the attempt to understand the meaning of ἀπολέσαι in Matthew 10:28 as something other than "destruction" in its most obvious meaning is based more on theological considerations that linguistic evidence.[322] While

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[313] Allen, 109.
[314] Barclay, *Matthew*, 387.
[315] Oepke, TDNT, 1:396.
[316] Vine, 3:19.
[317] Robertson, 1:83.
[318] Broadus, 230. Broadus fails to realize that ἀπολέσαι has stronger connotations than ἀποκτείνωσιν ("to kill"). The use of ἀπολέσαι, therefore, rather than excluding the meaning "to kill", actually strengthens it. Gundry, *Matthew,* 197, is probably more correct when he notes that Matthew used ἀπολέσαι instead of his more preferred ἐμβάλλειν because of the close relation in meaning between ἀπολέσαι ("to destroy") and ἀποκτείνωσιν ("to kill").
[319] Scharen 460-1. Scharen compares Matthew's ἀπόλλυμι with Luke's more indeterminate ἐμβάλλω, though that, of course, does not explain why ἀπόλλυμι should not imply destruction.
[320] Schweizer, *Matthew,* 248.
[321] Concerning rabbinical views on Gehenna see Strack and Billerbeck, 4:1100-1118.
[322] This is evident from blatant contradictions one sees is authors who translate ἀπολέσαι as "destroy" but maintain it does not refer to annihilation. Weaver, 208, for example, writes that Gehenna is "that place known in Jewish thinking as the place of fiery torment reserved for the eternal punishment of evildoers..." but goes on to add, "Jesus' reference to the destruction of soul and body in Gehenna thus points to the total and ultimate destruction of the human being." Morris, *Matthew*, 262, similarly

ἀπόλλυμι can have aspects of meaning beyond "destruction" - like "loss", "perdition" - "to destroy" seems to be the most natural and valid translation of ἀπολέσαι in the verse in question. An examination of the usage of the different forms of the verb ἀπόλλυμι in the Synoptics and beyond supports this.

For example, when the verb appears in its active form, and both the subject and the object of the action are a person (as in Matthew 10:28), the meaning is definitely "to destroy" or "to kill". Thus, in Mark 3:6 the Pharisees decide "to kill him (Jesus)" (αὐτόν ἀπολέσωσιν);[323] in Matthew 2:13 the wise men are instructed in a dream not to tell Herod about the child Jesus because he would want to "destroy" (ἀπολέσαι) the child; in Matthew 27:20 the priests and elders convince the crowds to ask for Barabbas' release and for the death of Jesus (ἀπολέσωσιν); in Mark 9:22 an evil spirit tries to kill a demon-possessed boy (ἀπολέσει αὐτόν) by throwing him in fire or water.[324] Therefore in the instances where ἀπόλλυμι occurs in the active voice with both the object and subject of action being persons, "to destroy" or "to kill" is the best rendering of the Greek verb.

Even more conclusive is the use of ἀπόλλυμι to describe acts of judgement by God. In addition to Matthew 10:28, nine other such references in the New Testament call us to render ἀπόλλυμι as "complete destruction" or "death". Of the nine references, four are in parables - three in the Evil Tenants (Mt. 21:41; Mk. 12:9; Lk. 20:16) and once in the Wedding of the King's Son (Mt. 22:7). In the former, the tenants who cultivate a vineyard on behalf of a rich landowner refuse to give him his share of the fruit. When the owner sends his representatives, the tenants kill some, and stone others. In all Synoptic versions, the story concludes with a rhetorical question: "what do you think the owner will do to the evil tenants?" The obvious answer is that he will destroy them, and in all three cases the point is that this parable

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writes that "they [the persecutors] lack the power to kill the soul..." and adds, "where they *are not able* [i.e. to kill the soul] he [God] *is able*..." (emphasis his), but then goes on to say that one is "not to understand 'destroy' as 'annihilation'" but as destruction "of all that makes for a rich and meaningful life".

[323] Cf. Mt 12:14; 27:20; Mk 11:28; Lk 19:47.

[324] An exception to such usage of derivatives of ἀπόλλυμι could be John 18:9, but here ἀπώλεσα is used metaphorically to indicate that Jesus had not "failed to save" anyone but Judas. A possible exception also in Rom. 14:15 where Paul warns believers not to "ruin" or "destroy" another believer over matters of food. Here again the idea is that by causing another to stumble a believer will lose his faith and suffer the fate of "destruction". The fact that here the idea of ἀπόλλυμι is death/destruction is understood by the contrast Paul makes: Christ died for him so that he should not die. Why then, by making him stumble are you willing to lead him to death?

refers to the Jews' rejection of Jesus and their punishment because of this. In the parable of the wedding of the king's son, the meaning of ἀπόλλυμι is even more obvious. Matthew says the king sent his armies and destroyed (ἀπώλεσε) the guests who not only had refused to attend the wedding, but also murdered the king's representatives.[325] A destruction resulting in death is definitely the sense conveyed of ἀπόλλυμι in these parables.

Similar observations apply to the other usages of ἀπόλλυμι in relation to divine judgement. In Luke 17:27 it describes the Flood that killed everybody (ἀπώλεσεν ἅπαντας). In Luke 17:29 it is what fire does when it killed the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. In 1 Corinthians 10:10 it is used of the Israelites who, for their disobedience perished in the desert by the hand of the "destroyer" - probably God's avenging angel.[326] Finally, in Jude 5 and 11, the author twice uses ἀπόλλυμι to describe the death of some Israelites because of their unbelief (v. 5) and during Korah's rebellion (v. 11). Thus in the nine times in the New Testament that derivatives of the verb ἀπόλλυμι are used in relation to God's acts of judgement, a destruction leading to death is always involved.

An examination of the use of ἀπόλλυμι in relation to God's judgements in the LXX also denotes a destruction involving death. The number of such texts is too large and we cannot look at each one individually, but a sample should be illustrative. In Exodus 19:24 God warns the Israelites not to go near mountain Sinai because that would kill them. In Leviticus 20:3,5,6, God says "I will destroy" ("kill") the different kinds of transgressors. In Numbers 16:33 ἀπόλλυμι describes what happens to Korah and the other rebels. In Joshua 23:5 ἀπόλλυμι is used together with ἐξόλλυμι, again in relation to God's judgements.[327]

In light of the above usages of ἀπόλλυμι it is reasonable to conclude that the ἀπολέσαι of Matthew 10:28 should be understood in its most natural and consistently used form - as destruction that involves the death of the object of the action. What we have therefore in Matthew 10:28 is the following sequence: a

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[325] The mention here of armies that bring destruction agrees perfectly with the Kretzer's point (see above) that in secular Greek ἀπόλλυμι is usually found in epic writings, frequently denoting violence. This is also true of the use of ἀπόλλυμι in the LXX (see below for a sample of texts). Perhaps here it is an allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem.

[326] See Exod. 12:23.

[327] Cf. also Gen. 18:24; 19:13; 20:4; Lev. 7:10,15; Num. 14:12; Dt. 2:21; 7:23; Job 12:15.

resurrection not only of the righteous but also of unrepentant sinners (this is implied), a judgement that condemns the latter (stated), and eventually their destruction/annihilation – an act where God presides (stated).

Conclusion

At the beginning of the chapter we suggested that Matthew 10:28 is perhaps the most important Gehenna occurrence in Matthew since it is the most complete definition of the author's understanding of what Gehenna involves. The other Matthean texts that refer to Gehenna provide a scantier picture and, therefore, against the backdrop of a unified authorship for the gospel, 10:28 becomes pivotal for understanding all the other Gehenna texts in the gospel. The above examination has shown that (a) Matthew 10:28 must be understood within the context of a death-bodily resurrection-judgement sequence, as was the case with Mark 9:43-50, Matthew 5:29-30; and 18:8-9; (b) in judgement it is God who presides; and (c) Matthew 10:28, in its use of ἀπόλλυμι portrays the eventual annihilation of the wicked in even clearer language than Mark 9:43-50.

Chapter V

Gehenna in the M Material

Matthew 5:21- 22; 23:15; 23:33

Having looked at Matthew's Markan and Q material we now turn to three Gehenna texts unique to the Gospel – 5:22, 23:15; and 23:33.[328] At first sight, these texts seem to offer little direct evidence about what Gehenna represents. However, a closer examination of the context may yield some valuable insights.

Matthew 5:21-22

> [21]"You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement.'
> [22a]But I say unto you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement;
> [22b]whoever insults [ῥακά] his brother shall be liable to the council
> [22c]and whoever says, 'You fool' [μωρέ] shall be liable to the [Gehenna] of fire."

Matthew 5:21-22 is the first of the "Six Antitheses" (5:21-48) in which Jesus compares instructions "of old" with his own pronouncements. The term "antitheses" does not adequately describe the essence of these sayings; Jesus is not disregarding or annulling what the "men of old" had heard, but rather attempts to clarify that not only actions bring condemnation but also thoughts and motives.[329] Hence the crucial point in 5:21-22 is that anger and offensive words against a "brother" are just as deserving of punishment as killing is.[330]

A note on the terms used in this verse is appropriate. Ῥακά comes from the Aramaic ריקה and means "emptyhead," "empty one," or simply "fool".[331] Μωρέ is the Greek equivalent[332] and could be translated, "you fool".[333] The word συνέδριον

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[328] See Kloppenborg, *Q*, 104ff for relation of Mt. 5:17-48 to Q.
[329] See Levison, "Purpose," 171-194, and "Initiative," 251-254. The Matthean Jesus could not have meant 5:21-48 as an abrogation of the Old Testament law, as 5:17-19 clarifies. The antithesis is rather between "what Jesus demands and what the Pharisees demand".
[330] See Barton, "'Royal Law,'" for a general discussion of the moral aspect of Mt. 5.
[331] Bauer, 733; Koehler and Baumgartner, 1227-8, translate the verb form ריק to "empty" or "pour out".
[332] Not a transliteration of the Hebrew מורה. See Gundry, *Matthew*, 84.
[333] Bauer, 531.

of 22b can literally be translated "council" though it usually refers to the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin.[334]

Beyond these points on which there is agreement among commentators, 5:22 poses some exegetical problems. The saying mentions three offences: (a) anger, (b) calling someone ῥακά and (c) calling someone μωρέ. It also mentions three respective punishments to befall the offender: he will be liable (a) to judgement (τῇ κρίσει), (b) to the council (συνέδριον), and (c) to the Gehenna of fire. The punishments are thought to refer to the local court (22a),[335] to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem (22b) and to God's judgement in Gehenna (22c). The problem is that, while the offences appear to be very similar, there is an ascending order in the punishment. This differentiation between offence and punishment has attracted considerable attention and many possible solutions have been offered. My purpose is to establish the meaning of Gehenna in this text rather than solve this exegetical problem. Nonetheless, we can only understand the implications of the Gehenna imagery if we have a plausible context. I will therefore offer a brief, critical overview of some of the suggested solutions, and then look at implications of the context for Gehenna in verse 22c.

Suggested Solutions

A common attempt to make sense of this difficult text is to regard the three offences and three punishments as being in an ascending order. Schweizer,[336] for example, argues that ῥακά is an insult that interferes with another's human relationships, while μωρέ means "fool" in the sense of "godless" and thus interferes with someone's relationship with God. In this respect, calling another μωρέ is worse than saying ῥακά, which, in turn, is worse than hidden anger. Similarly, Barclay argues that μωρέ in contrast to ῥακά, carries moral overtones (e.g. Ps. 14:1) so that calling someone μωρέ is a worse offence that requires greater punishment.[337] The problem with such logic is twofold. First, the lexical definitions cited above indicate that there is no real distinction between ῥακά and μωρέ – certainly not one so great

[334] Bauer, 786. For a fuller discussion of these words and other possible derivations, see Davies and Allison, 1:513-4.
[335] Understanding τῇ κρίσει as a local court poses several problems, see below.
[336] Schweizer, *Matthew*, 118-119.
[337] Barclay, *Matthew*, 139-140.

that would call for punishment in a human court in one case, and in the divine judgement in the other. Secondly, such a distinction between terms defeats the central point of the pericope, namely, that anger in all its forms and manifestations is as bad as murder and no real distinctions should be made between degrees of guilt.

Jeremias has taken the opposite view in arguing that all punishments in 5:22 are essentially the same.[338] He maintains that the phrase "liable to" (ἔνοχος ἔσται) in 22a,b,c, is not followed by references to different courts but "to the penalty one is subject to... or guilt incurred," namely death. The point therefore is that "anyone angry with another deserves to be punished with death"; the same follows for those who use the words ῥακά and μωρέ. Thus κρίσις, συνέδριον and Gehenna are "three expressions of the death penalty, in a kind of crescendo."[339]

Another attempt to make sense of Matthew 5:22 has been to amend the text by removing one or more of the clauses as secondary.[340] Such attempts would appear to solve the problem in a satisfactory way. Against them, Guelich has convincingly argued for the unity and authenticity of 5:22.[341] Beyond Guelich's objections, it seems that attempts to alter the text are in the long run self-defeating. If Matthew or another redactor deliberately reconstructed a more authentic version of 5:22, then we still have to answer the question why. It seems doubtful that a redactor would take the liberty to add, or alter the material and still leave us with a verse that poses such exegetical problems. If, on the other hand, a copyist added in the margins of a manuscript a gloss, which later was incorporated into the text, the process of incorporation of the sidenotes would have taken some time. This in turn could be expected to have left some evidence in the manuscript tradition. But no such evidence exists and this makes the attempt to alter the text rather arbitrary.[342]

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[338] Jeremias, TDNT, 6:973-976.

[339] Jeremias, TDNT, 6:976.

[340] Davies, 235ff, maintains that 22b is "a gemaric [rabbinical commentary] addition, explanatory of vv. 21,22a." Suggs, "Antitheses," 96, views 5:22 as an independent saying, possibly without the "I say unto you," and argues that it was Matthew who supplied v. 21 as a fresh context.

[341] Guelich, "Matthew 5:22," 39-52. See also his article "Antitheses" 444-457, where he studies all six "antitheses". His conclusion is that "the first and second antitheses (5:21f., 27f) show no clear signs of Matthew's redaction." Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 274-276.

[342] A plausible reconstruction, was originally suggested by Kohler "Mt. 5:22," 91ff, who argued that Mt. 5:22b-c are two translations of a single Semitic original. He cites Tertullian (*de pud.* 6) and Cyprian (*Test.* III.13) who both have a single clause in place of 22b-c, and in both writers the penalty is Gehenna. "'Angry Word,'" 10-13, builds on this view, and speculates that μωρέ of 22c was added to translate ῥακά. Likewise, συνέδριον was inserted by a copyist to explain that τῇ κρίσει of 5:21 refers to a human court – the Sanhedrin. Eventually, the two notes became a whole phrase that was added to the verse. Mt. 5:22 would thus have originally read as follows: "But I say unto you that everyone who

Luz favours keeping the text as it is and regards 22a as a general statement illustrated by two concrete examples.[343] There is, however, one objection to this attempt – namely that Jesus, as recorded by Matthew, would bother to refer to what the Sanhedrin should or should not do in cases of words of insult. It is unlikely that the Sanhedrin actually dealt with such minor cases, even if in theory it could.[344] It seems that this pericope is more concerned with the verdict of God than the decisions of a human court.[345]

Zahn has proposed that the incongruity is intentional and serves as ironic commentary on the parody of scribal exegesis in order to show that casuistic distinctions are foolish.[346] Lenski agrees.[347] Jesus says that anger is as much subject to condemnation as murder,[348] and therefore the transgressor deserves to be executed by the local court. But if anger is bad, then what if it is expressed in a bad word? In this case, the Sanhedrin would take over, but it still can only pass the death sentence, nothing more. What if the bad word is a trifle harsher? Since there is no higher court than the Sanhedrin, then the offender would have to face God in Gehenna. But what if the offender says a still worse word, or acts on the anger? Obviously, it is unnecessary to make such distinctions in the text; the incongruity here is intentional and aims to demolish the casuistic treatment of the commandment. The problem with this interpretation is that it does not fit with the tone of remaining of the pericope. In

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is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement and whoever insults [ῥακά] his brother shall be liable to Gehenna of fire."

[343] Luz, *Matthew*, 253.

[344] Schürer, 2:199-226, cites a number of functions for the Sanhedrin: it was the final tribunal on Jewish law (*b. Sanh.* 11:2; *b. Eduy.* 7:4); it had the authority to deal with charges of idolatry or to try false prophets; call for a war of conquest; approve constructions in Jerusalem and the Temple area; and oversee the establishment of lesser councils (*b. Sanh.* 1:5). According to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 14:835-839, it could also settle questions of priestly genealogies (*b. Mid.* 5:4) and appoint a king or high priest (*b. Sanh.* 1:5). Schürer suggests that some of these functions were purely theoretical – a reminiscence of times when Israel was independent. He places greater historical value on the information contained in the gospels and Acts according to which the Sanhedrin dealt with people accused of blasphemy (Mt. 26:65; John 19:7; Acts 6:13), seducing of the people (Acts 6:13), and breaking the law (Acts 23).

[345] Note the repeated introduction "You have heard it was said..." or "It was also said..." followed by an authoritative "... but I tell you," (5:21-22,27-28,31-32). The implication is that what Jesus says carries more weight than what "had been said". This is also underlined by the two references to divine judgement for offenses that would pass unnoticed in a human court (5:22,30), and also by the call to the hearers to adjust their behavior to accord with the "but I say..." in order that they may be "children of... the [heavenly] father" (5:45,48).

[346] Zahn, 228.

[347] Lenski, *Matthew*, 218-219; cf. Meier, 244-245.

[348] The Pharisees would not have totally approved such a view. Both the Old Testament (Prov. 6:34; 14:17,29; 15:1; 16:4) and other Jewish writings (1QS 6:26; 7:2-4; *b.Ned.* 22b, *b.Pes.* 66a-b) condemn anger, but not in as radical a way as here.

the following five antitheses, Jesus once uses a hyperbole (5:29,30), but beyond that, there is nothing that could be described as ironic. The verses in question consist of sincere and solemn exposition of what was given to the people of old. To say that verse 22 is an ironic comment on scribal exegesis does not seem to fit the wider context and tone of this pericope.

More recently, Craig Keener has prepared yet another explanation to this difficult text. He argues that συνέδριον refers to a heavenly court and that therefore 5:22 contains three different references to heavenly judgement.[349] He further develops his argument in a later article in which he appeals to the idea of a heavenly courtroom in rabbinic writings.[350] Such a motif is foreshadowed in such Old Testament passages as 1 Kings 22, Job 1-2, and Psalm 82. The rabbinic material is late but he argues that the tradition could have been in circulation around the time the gospels were written.[351] Keener's attempt is interesting both in that it makes sense of the three judgement phrases and in that it ascribes all three forms of judgement to God; this is more in line with the tone of the passage as a whole, as I have explained above. Unfortunately, the evidence of the Synoptics on the use of the word συνέδριον is rather uniform – when used in the singular, it always refers to the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, and in the two instances it appears in the plural,[352] it refers to other, local human courts. Despite its merits, therefore, Keener's view seems forced.

Finally, T. H. Robinson suggested that 5:22b should be seen together with 5:21 as what "the men of old had heard". Thus the essence of the text would be as follows: "You have heard it said, whoever kills will come up for sentence; but I tell you, whoever is angry with his brother will be sentenced by God. Whoever maligns his brother must come before the Sanhedrin; [but I tell you] whoever curses his brother will go to the fire of Gehenna."[353] Robinson's explanation has surprisingly attracted little attention in theological circles.[354] Such a construction has two

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[349] Keener, *Matthew*, 114. France, *Matthew*, 120, takes a similar view when he argues that συνέδριον refers to the ultimate (God's) judgement.
[350] Keener, "Matthew 5:22," 46.
[351] Keener cites R. Akiba *b. Mark.*13b, R. Meir *Ex.Rab.* 30:18, R. Simeon b. Yohai *Eccl.Rab.* 2:12, and also *b.Sanh.* 19a which could record a pre-Christian tradition where Simon ben Shetach taught that the Sanhedrin pronounced justice on God's authority.
[352] Mt. 10:17; Mk. 13:9.
[353] Robinson, *Matthew,* 39.
[354] At the same time McNeile, 62, has adopted a similar view, but since then there have been no further advocates.

advantages: (a) every difficulty disappears and 5:21-22 make perfect sense; and (b) we have a parallelism that beautifully sets God's justice over and above that of human courts. Thus, while the latter may inflict capital punishment on those who kill (5:21), God will one day not hesitate to do the same to those who harbour anger against others (5:22a). While the Sanhedrin may in exceptional cases bother to hear a case involving insult (5:22b), God considers such an offence as worthy of the fires of Gehenna and therefore will not let it escape his notice (5:22c). In 5:21 and 22a, human courts and God pass the same sentence for different offences. In 22b and 22c they pass different sentences on similar offences – with God always showing higher expectations of behaviour. The only weakness with this explanation is that we must assume that Matthew intended his readers to understand that there should be a second "But I tell you" in 22b, which is not improbable, but neither obvious.

Having looked at the different attempts to understand this difficult text, I would like to offer an observation that might serve as a guideline in understanding Matthew 5:21-22, and, more specifically, the function of Gehenna in this text. In 5:22a κρίσις cannot refer to a human court, as is often assumed. Bauer points out that κρίσις very rarely refers to a human court.[355] Moreover, there is no human court that can judge anger, especially when anger is not manifested in any external action, or at least, word. Finally, even if a human court could judge anger, what kind of sentence would it pass? A small fine? A beating? Certainly nothing more radical. And after all, this pericope is not primarily interested in what human courts do, but in what God considers to be wrong. Interpreting 5:22a as a reference to a human local court destroys the very point Jesus is trying to make. 5:22a is only seen thus because of the assumed ascending order of punishment.[356]

Given the above observations and survey of possible solutions, I conclude with the following: Robinson's attempt seems to deal most completely with the issues raised in Matthew 5:21-22. Alternatively, the approaches of Jeremias and Luz also

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[355] Bauer, 452-3.

[356] Many commentators have recognized as arbitrary this interpretation of κρίσις as a reference to a local court. E.g. Allen, 48, admitted that anger cannot be judged in court. France, *Matthew*, 120, realizes that 22a refers to judgement from God. Stock, 84, proclaims that 22a could hardly be a reference to local law because divine judgement is behind all anger. Albright and Mann, 61, make the same point and add that only God knows what is in a person's heart. Even Schweizer, who concludes that as the text stands at the moment 22a is a reference to a local court, nonetheless thinks that in light of verse, 21-22a originally must have meant of divine judgement (*Matthew*, 118). And Jeremias regards 22a not as a reference to a local court, but to the death sentence pronounced by it (Jeremias, TDNT, 6:975-6).

handle the issues well. The remaining solutions meet with considerable objections. Without therefore being conclusive, we may use the above survey as background for the issues involved in understanding this text. This background becomes important, as it is only through the context that we may draw any conclusions about what Gehenna represents.

Implications on Gehenna

Now, we consider again 5:21-22 and try to offer some comments on the role Gehenna plays. 5:21 obviously refers to the death sentence, as this was the punishment decreed for any murderer.[357] The death sentence would be passed by an earthly court, yet "judgement" is not so much a reference to the local court itself, as it is to the sentencing decreed by God. By way of comparison, then, 5:22a must also refer to the death sentence, this time as the judgement of God. This is the point that Jesus was trying to make after all – that anger is in the same category as murder, and therefore deserves a similar punishment. Furthermore, it becomes obvious that ῥακά and μωρέ are outward expressions of anger and should therefore call forth the same sentence, if not from humans, then certainly from God. This is specifically stated in 5:22c where the one calling his brother μωρέ will face God's judgement in Gehenna. Despite the ambiguity of 5:22b, it is nonetheless obvious that we have an interesting interplay between the death sentence of 5:21 and the sentence God will pronounce in the day of judgement in 5:22a and 22c.

The implications for Gehenna are obvious. In Matthew 10:28 we have observed that Gehenna is a synonym for the day of judgement when God will destroy the wicked. The picture here is essentially the same. In 10:28 we saw that the verb ἀπόλλυμι refered to both body and soul to indicate that God will annihilate rather than everlastingly torture the wicked. Here the comparison with the death sentence of 5:21 points in a similar direction. Keeping this thought in mind, we may proceed to examine the other two M Gehenna texts: Matthew 23:15 and 23:33.

Matthew 23:15,33

> [15]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he

[357] Cf. Ex. 21:12; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:16-34; Deut. 17:6-7.

> becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of [Gehenna] as yourselves."
> [33]"You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to [Gehenna]?"

We now come to the last two instances in Matthew, which refer to Gehenna. These two texts are grouped together because they come from the same pericope. As with 5:22, Gehenna occurs naturally and Matthew makes no deliberate effort to describe it. We can only draw some conclusions by considering the context of the two verses. Both verses form part of a pericope that may be called "the seven woes" against the Pharisees (23:13-33).[358] The word "woe" itself indicates "a state of intense hardship or distress," a sense of impending disaster, or horror, a feeling that the "strong and branding judgement" of God is approaching.[359] The context is therefore very solemn.

In 23:15 Jesus[360] condemns the Pharisees not so much for their missionary zeal, but for the result of their efforts – converts who are more hypocritical than the Pharisees themselves.[361] There has been some discussion about the extent of the Pharisees' missionary activity. The time up to the second Jewish revolt in AD 132-135 generally has been considered a time of great missionary activity among the Jews. Jeremias claims, for example that "Jesus came upon the scene in the midst of what was *par excellence* the missionary age of Jewish history."[362] There is certainly much evidence that Gentiles were attracted to Judaism.[363] Possibly the Pharisees were out to convert "godfearers" who had not taken the step of circumcision to become Jews. Recently, however, scholars like M. Goodman and Scott McKnight have challenged

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[358] There is an eighth woe in 23:14, but this was not part of the original text, as most of the earlier manuscript witnesses testify.
[359] Stock, 353.
[360] Flowers, 67-69, questions whether this is a dominical saying. He argues that the Pharisees were "one of the finest forces in the history of Judaism," despite the fact that some were narrow, hard, unsympathetic and hypocritical. He maintains it was the priests who crucified Jesus and that the Lord would have known better than to accuse them so openly. J. Sanders, 95-96, similarly thinks even if the disputes between Jesus and the Pharisees are historically reliable, they do not necessarily reflect a great conflict between the two, as the differences within Pharisaism, and between the Pharisees and the Sadduces were just as substantial; he holds that the Pharisees were generally tolerant. Dunn, *Jesus*, 61-88, suggests that such a quietistic portrayal of the Pharisees is unrealistic. Cf. Westerholm, DJG, 612-13. Westerholm argues that a number of the Pharisees were offended by the words and actions of Jesus, and concludes that the "broad picture of Pharisees in conflict with Jesus seems well rooted in the Gospel tradition".
[361] Justin Martyr wrote, "proselytes... twofold more than yourselves blaspheme His [Jesus'] name" (*Dial.* 122).
[362] Jeremias, *Promise*, 12.
[363] E.g. Jn. 12:20; Acts 2:11; 6:5; 8:26-28; 10:1,2; 13:43.

the prevailing view, arguing that Jews were actually cool towards prospective converts and that the Pharisees were out to convert other Jews to their ranks.[364] Even if this were the case, we still have an adequate *Sitz im Leben* for this saying.[365]

The phrase "son of Gehenna" is a Semitism that simply means "destined for" or "worthy of" Gehenna.[366] Such usage does not appear elsewhere in the relevant literature. The phrases "son of" or "child of" do, however, occur in many different contexts and with various meanings. Constructions that come closest to "son of Gehenna" are probably τέκνα ἀπωλείας and υἱός ἀπωλείας.[367] The former appears once in the LXX (Is. 57:4). The latter occurs three times – in the LXX (Prov. 24:23) and in John 17:12 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

We briefly consider these two related expressions. Their point of contact is the use of ἀπώλεια, the noun associated with the verb ἀπόλλυμι. In the above discussion of Matthew 10:28, we have seen that the verb is a favourite Synoptic and, especially, Matthean word used in conjunction with judgement.[368] We have concluded that the meaning is most often "to destroy" especially when used in relation to divine judgement.[369]

The noun ἀπώλεια appears only three times in the Synoptics but is more common in the rest of the New Testament, the LXX, and the "Pseudepigrapha",

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[364] Goodman, 53-78. Goodman does not question the existence of large numbers of proselytes but rather the view that the Pharisees or other Jewish groups were intentionally engaged in proselytizing. His thesis is weak. He first cites an impressive array of evidence that could indicate a strong interest of Jews in proselytizing and then tries to refute it. Yet, his refutation stands on a number of unlikely possibilities, namely: that the word προσήλυτος as used in Matthew 23:15 may not necessarily have the meaning of "convert" it most often has from the LXX onwards; that all the Jewish works in Greek were written solely for Greek speaking Jews and not to attract converts; that the reports of the Byzantine writers Julius Paris and Nepotianus who state that the Jews were expelled from Rome in 139 BC and AD 19 because of missionary activity may not be accurate (though, admittedly, these sources are late and their historical value questionable); that Eleazar and Ananias just happened to be in Adiabene when king Izates was converted to Judaism and that maybe their trip there had not been undertaken with that purpose in mind. He suggests that the Jews actually viewed converts with suspicion though he admits that there is no clear evidence to this in the first century AD. Moving beyond Goodman's arguments, there is no reason why proselytism should be an either-or question. Judaism at the turn of the era was a theologically diverse body and in all likelihood there were groups in favour of proselytizing, while others were cool towards new converts. Cf. McKnight, *Light Among the Gentiles*. Feldman, 141, considers the proselyting activities "enormously successful during this time".

[365] Newport, 98-100.

[366] Hendriksen, 829.

[367] Cf. ἔθνος ἀπωλείας ("a nation destined for destruction") and λαός ἀπωλείας ("a people destined for destruction") in Sir. 16:9 and Is. 34:5 respectively.

[368] Ἀπόλλυμι appears 52 times in the Synoptics: Matthew 15, Mark 10, and Luke 27. This is clearly indicative that the Synopticists were at home with this verb.

[369] See comments on Mt. 10:28.

where it is often used in relation to divine judgement, frequently in a temporal or eschatological sense.[370] In such usages Oepke renders the term as "destruction", but concludes his analysis by stating that "destruction" is not "a simple extinction of existence, but of an everlasting state of torment and death."[371] His conclusion is noteworthy, for it contains a contradiction – "a state of torment and death" – two states that cannot co-exist. He probably thinks that "destruction" refers to eternal torment. This conclusion is, however, wholly unwarranted. Not once is something like this stated or implied in any of the biblical instances where ἀπώλεια is used of divine and, especially, eschatological judgement. In fact, the opposite seems to be the case.

In most cases ἀπώλεια appears on its own without further explanation, implying that it is probably to be understood in its most natural sense, complete destruction. In other instances it appears with words or in contexts that imply annihilation. Thus, in Deuteronomy 7:23 and Ezekiel 25:7, for example, it is combined with the verb ἐξολοθρεύσω. In Jeremiah 44:12, Ezekiel 29:10 and Judith 6:4 it is clothed in military language and in the two former instances appears together with ῥομφαία. In Jeremiah 12:11 it is used with the word ἀφανισμός; in 1 Macabbees with συντέλεια, while in Tobit 14:15 it describes the destruction of Nineveh. In 1 Timothy 6:9 it accompanies ὄλεθρος, which most definitely denotes destruction involving death.[372] In 2 Peter 3:7, the author compares the Flood that "destroyed" the world and its inhabitants with the day of judgement when "by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the godless." Obviously, the "destruction" of the wicked in the day of judgement will be like the "destruction" of the wicked during

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[370] In earlier writings, ἀπώλεια is used of God's temporal judgement, while in later compositions the eschatological dimension is more pronounced. This is especially so with the New Testament where sixteen of eighteen instances refer to the judgement of God: Mt. 7:13; John 17:12; Acts 8:20; Rm. 9:22; Phil. 1:28; 3:19; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 6:9; Heb. 10:39; 2 Pet. 2:1,1,3; 3:7,16; Rev. 17:8,11..

[371] Oepke, TDNT, 1:397.

[372] Schneider, TDNT, 5:168-71 and Bauer, 276. Schneider explains that ὄλεθρος means "destruction," "death." In 1 Tim. 6:9 he translates ὄλεθρος and ἀπώλεια as "complete destruction." The ὀλοθρευτής of 1 Cor. 10:10 is the destroying angel of God who killed those Israelites who murmured in the desert. Likewise, the verb ὄλλυμι of Heb. 11:28 is used with reference to the destroying angel who killed the firstborn of Egypt. Bauer, 276, adds that the related ἐξόλλυμι means "to destroy utterly," or "to root out".

the Flood.[373] Finally, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8 the author states that God will καταργήσει the υἱόν ἀπωλείας. If we are to draw any conclusions about the meaning of ἀπώλεια in relation to divine judgement from the above sample of references from a variety of sources, we can only say that it means "destruction involving death". Oddly, Oepke actually seems to accept this himself when he translates ἀπολλύων ("one who is the agent of ἀπώλεια") as "destroyer" or "exterminator"![374]

Another conceptually related construction is τέκνα ὀργῆς found only once in Ephesians 2:3. The noun ὀργή, however, is quite common in the relevant literature, and is used four times in the Synoptics. In the early Christian context, it is mostly related to God's eschatological judgement. It is "thought of not so much of emotion as in terms of the outcome of an angry frame of mind," that is, God's mind.[375] In the Apocrypha and the LXX, it is still used primarily with reference to God's judgement, but the temporal element is more prominent than the eschatological. The verb ὀργίζομαι occurs three times in Matthew out of a total of five in the Synoptics.

The usage of ὀργή and ὀργίζομαι also point to a destruction that involves death. In one instance ὀργή is combined with ἀπώλεια,[376] and once each with the verb ἀφανισθήσονται and the noun συντέλεια.[377] Twice in the Synoptics it is followed by unambigious annihilation imagery.[378] Stählin explains that in the Old Testament there is a close relation between the wrath of God and death and this is reflected in such New Testament texts as Revelation 1:18-19, 13:1-18. And in the New Testament it is closely connected with "destruction".[379]

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[373] In the case of 2 Pet. 3:7-13, this is further indicated by the fact that after the day of judgement when the "heavens will be set ablaze and [be] dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire," (3:12) God will create a new heaven and a new earth (3:13).

[374] Bauer, 397. The word ἀπολλύων appears once in the New Testament (Rev. 9:11) as a proper name, and a translation of the Hebrew "Abbadon".

[375] Bauer, 582. It has been suggested (Hanson, 71ff), that οργη is the natural consequence that will fall on those who continue in sin, and not really an act or reaction of God. That it is almost an autonomous entity alongside God. Stählin convincingly sets forth why this cannot be so (TDNT, 5:422-47).

[376] Rm. 9:22.

[377] Job 4:9 and Ps. 58 (59):13 respectively.

[378] Mt. 3:7 see discussion below, and Lk. 3:7.

[379] Stählin, TDNT 5:444, understands "destruction" as everlasting suffering. In Rev. 14:10 ὀργή is followed by what may be a reference to everlasting suffering. However, the Old Testament connection between the wrath of God and death, the similar New Testament reflections, and the usages of ὀργή in a context where destruction by death is clearly implied seem to be more weighty considerations.

We may safely conclude that the terms τέκνα ἀπωλείας, υἱός ἀπωλείας, and τέκνα ὀργῆς fit better into an annihilation context than in to one of everlasting suffering. The question, however, may be rightly asked, to what extent these designations have any bearing on Matthew's "son of Gehenna". After all, they are used in the LXX, in the Gospel of John and by Paul but not in any of the Synoptics. This observation is valid. Nonetheless, we have seen that even though Matthew and the other Synoptics do not use these constructions, they are very much aware of the related words ἀπόλλυμι, ἀπώλεια, ὀργή and ὀργίζομαι and use them in similar eschatological settings of judgement. These terms were popular in the Jewish and early Christian milieu and it would not be farfetched to assume that Matthew knew of their usage when using the designation "son of Gehenna." That "son of Gehenna" means "son of destruction" in a sense that involves annihilation, is further verified by its close connection with the mention of Gehenna in 23:33.

Matthew 23:33 belongs to the same "Seven Woes" as Matthew 23:15. Actually, it is the concluding verse and serves as a solemn summary of the fate that awaits those condemned under the "woes". The term "offspring of vipers" with which the verse begins, reminds us of Jesus' words in 12:34. Nonetheless, the whole verse bears an even closer resemblance with the words of John the Baptist in 3:7, so much so that it has been suggested Matthew added this text as a concluding remark.[380] While the Baptist speaks of "the coming wrath," Jesus here speaks of "being sentenced to Gehenna" or of the "condemnation of Gehenna". Davies and Allison argue that the use of "Gehenna" instead of "wrath" in 23:33 is intentional and "forges a link with verse 15".[381]

The same imagery is met in the related passage in 3:7-12. There, after John the Baptist points to the coming wrath and utters his call for repentance, he continues with two pictures of what will happen if repentance is not witnessed among his hearers. In 3:10 he says that like a tree that does not bear fruit, they will be felled and

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[380] Davies and Allison, 2:306; Gundry, *Matthew*, 469. This is possible, but not necessarily so. According to Matthew, Jesus associates closely with the preaching and ministry of John the Baptist (cf. Mt. 3:2 with 4:17, and also 11:2-19). Thus, there is no reason why Jesus should not have said something similar to John the Baptist. Actually, it is not unlikely that Jesus deliberately used the words of the Baptist in order to forge a link between his and the Baptist's ministry in the minds of his hearers. Kinniburgh, 414-416, is probably correct when he says that while John warns the Jewish leaders to repent and escape from the coming wrath, Jesus seems to imply that their refusal to repent of their sins and accept him has already sealed their fate (cf. 23:32).

[381] Davies and Allison, 3:307.

thrown to the fire.[382] In 3:12 judgement is pictured as a farmer who clears his threshing floor, collects the wheat, puts it in a barn and burns the chaff with "unquenchable fire".[383] "Unquenchable fire" is not a fire that will burn forever, but a fire of such intensity that it cannot be put out.[384] The use of the verb κατακαίω, which means "to consume," clarifies this.[385]

Conclusion

We may conclude that the three M texts all regard Gehenna as a place of divine judgement where God will annihilate rather than torture sinners. In 5:22 this is shown by the way in which Matthew groups together the death sentence that falls on the murderer in 5:21 with the sentence that God will pronounce on those who are angry and insult their fellow humans in 5:22 (anger being an offence similar to murder). In 23:33 the eventual annihilation of the wicked in judgement is implied both by the imagery used from nature, and by the close linguistic and thematic connection with the words of John the Baptist in 3:7 where the coming judgement is placed in the context of annihilation in clear and unequivocal terms. In 23:15 the death of the wicked is hinted at by the connection with 23:33 since both verses belong to the same pericope, and by the thematic parallels of "son of Gehenna" with "son of destruction" and "children of wrath". There is nothing in the above texts from Matthew's special source that even vaguely points to everlasting suffering.

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[382] The verb "to throw" is βάλλω, which figures prominently in the Synoptic Gehenna texts.

[383] This is another picture from life in Palestine. The farmer would collect wheat and chaff alike. He would then use the fan and throw everything in the air. The heavier wheat would come back down to the threshing floor, while the light chaff would be blown away in the wind. Beare, 97, observes that while the chaff would be blown away, it was unlikely that a farmer would have gone to the trouble to gather it to burn. The mention of fire therefore is added intentionally to emphasize the nature and certainty of the coming judgement.

[384] See my comments on Mk. 9:43-48.

[385] Κατακαίω means not only to burn, but "to consume" by fire (cf. Bauer, 412). It is used in relation to burning the gates of the Jerusalem temple (1 Mac. 4:38), of books (Acts 19:19), trees and grass of the earth (Rev. 8:7), weeds (Mt. 13:40) and chaff here. In Ex. 3:2 Moses' encounter with God on mount Choreb, it is stated that the bush was on fire (καίεται πυρί) but *not* consumed (οὐ κατεκαίετο). In contrast to the burning bush, the chaff of Mt. 3:12 *will be* consumed.

Chapter VI

Gehenna in Luke

Luke 12:4-5

> "I tell you my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has power to cast into Gehenna; yes I tell you, fear him."
> Luke 12:4-5

We have looked at Gehenna in Mark and in Matthew's different sources. Here we consider to the only Gehenna text in the gospel of Luke, namely in 12:4-5. Luke 12:4-5 is from Q[386] and corresponds to Matthew 10:28. In Luke the context (12:2-9) is a discourse addressed to the disciples where Jesus calls them to be ready to cope with trials that they may face in the future. In Matthew 10:28, the context (10:26-33) is not dissimilar; Jesus addresses the disciples, warning them that in their missionary endeavours they are likely to face persecution.

A comparison between Luke 12:4-5 and Matthew 10:28 shows both a definite literary relation between the two texts and considerable differences in wording. Several questions immediately surface. What is the exact literary relation between the two texts? How may we account for the differences? Which of the two retains the more original wording? Then, concentrating on Luke 12:4-5, we see that, from an exegetical point of view, the text appears more obscure than Matthew 10:28. Does Luke envision an eschatological judgement after an implied resurrection of the dead, as Matthew does, or is he concerned with individual judgement at the point of death? Does Luke regard Gehenna as a concept that involves corporeal punishment as Matthew does, or does it involve only the soul? And does he envision the extinction of sinners, or their eternal torment?[387] Luke 12:4-5 has not received much attention by commentators over the years. In the chapter on Matthew 10:28 I discussed the two texts in relation to Q and their possible editorial contributions. My conclusion on exegetical/linguistic grounds was that Luke retains a more authentic reading of Q.

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[386] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 89.
[387] See for example, Bovon, 2:254.

Here I shall attempt to address the function of this text in the Gehenna tradition in two steps: (a) investigate Luke's general views on resurrection and judgement and (b) consider Luke 12:4-5 and draw some conclusions about the evangelist's understanding of what Gehenna involved.

Luke and Resurrection

One of the more interesting attempts to explain Luke 12:4-5 in comparison with Matthew 10:28 has been made by C. Milikowsky.[388] Milikowsky has tried to account for the difference in wording by arguing that Matthew and Luke worked with different concepts of Gehenna. He argues that while Matthew viewed Gehenna as the place where God would destroy the wicked in a future Gehenna following a corporeal resurrection of the wicked, Luke regards Gehenna as "a post-mortem, incorporeal hell of souls."[389] His argument rests on two premises: that (a) in contrast to Matthew and Mark, Luke did not believe in a resurrection for the wicked but only in a resurrection for the righteous, and that (b) in contrast to Matthew and Mark, Luke did not regard judgement as a future eschatological event when all the wicked would be judged, but as an individual judgement at the point of death.[390] Before we look at Luke 12:4-5 itself, it is therefore appropriate to examine Luke's overall views on resurrection and judgement. Did Luke reject a resurrection for the wicked as Milikowsky maintains? And did he view judgement as something that happens at the point of each individual's death?

The two motifs of resurrection and judgement are closely related. If there is a day of judgement for the wicked, then it follows that some sort of resurrection precedes it. If there is no day of judgement for the wicked, then it could be argued that they receive their reward individually at death.

Milikowsky draws on several texts from Luke to build his argument. For example, to prove that Luke believed in individual reward and retribution immediately after death, he cites the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-

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[388] Milikowsky, 238-249.
[389] Milikowsky, 242.
[390] Milikowsky also refers to a similar differentiation in rabbinical writings between a post-mortem Gehenna and an eschatological Gehenna where the wicked are cast after a day of judgement. The comparison of Luke 12:4-5 with later rabbinical writings is used not so much as proof to support his exegesis as a case to illustrate a point. He thus holds that Luke 12:4, 5 is the first attestation of a Gehenna that follows death, an idea that matured in later rabbinical writings and that "as the Jewish texts... help shed light on the passages in Matthew and Luke, so too these passages in the Gospels help us understand the historical context of the Jewish text" (248-249).

31) and Jesus' words to the thief on the cross, "truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43).[391] The former will be discussed later below. Suffice it here to say that it is difficult to draw conclusions from a single parable. As for Jesus' words towards the thief on the cross, it is very doubtful that Luke intended his readers to understand that on that day (or the next for that matter), both Jesus and the thief would find themselves in paradise. Luke and his sources indicate in other instances the conviction that neither of them did go to paradise - the thief did not die that day and probably not for several days,[392] while Jesus according to Luke, did not "ascend" during the time he was dead.[393]

Likewise, to prove that Luke did not believe in a resurrection for the wicked, Milikowsky cites two Lukan passages (14:14 and 20:27-40); while they speak about resurrection of the righteous he maintains they say nothing about resurrection for the wicked. However, an argument from silence is always precarious, and actually, at least in Luke 14:14, the fact that Luke needs to clarify that he is speaking about the "resurrection of the just" may indicate indirectly that he believed in another resurrection.[394] We thus see that Milikowsky's arguments in support of his thesis that

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[391] For J. Green, 823, "today" indicates the immediacy of salvation (Lk. 4:21; 19:9) and Jesus' regal power even in death, if we are to assume that the thief went immediately to paradise. Bock, 1857-8, places paradise within the confines of hades and maintains that the words of Jesus imply an immediate move into an intermediate state where the thief is conscious of God's blessings. Both views are negated by the fact that the thief probably did not die on that day, and probably for several days (see below).

[392] According to Luke's source, Mk 15:44, Pilate expresses surprise that Jesus had already died within a few hours of the crucifixion. Crucifixion was a slow, painful means of execution that often took several days before a person died; cf. John 19:31-34.

[393] See Acts 2:27,31 where it is stated that Jesus went to the grave ("Ἅδης, - "Sheol") at his death, rather than Paradise (cf. John's account in 20:17 and especially Matthew's expression in 12:40 both of which complement the Acts statement). In Jewish thought Paradise (a) was a literal place on earth in the past, the equivalent of the Garden of Eden; (b) had at some point been removed from its accessible location to an unknown place; and (c) would one day be restored by God to human access and placed in Palestine somewhere in the vicinity of Jerusalem (cf. Jeremias, TDNT, 5:765-72, and Bietenhard, DNTT, 2:760-4). Concerning (b), the removal of Paradise, opinions varied: some held it was taken to heaven, others to a high mountain, others to the extreme ends of the earth, either towards the east, or less often, the west. In its hidden state, it was sometimes regarded as the abode of the righteous in an intermediate state; to support this assertion Jeremias cites SE 1 En. 70:4; Ap. Mos. 37:5; T. Abr. 10B, 20A. It is not clear how popular the belief in an intermediate state was during the time the gospels were written, neither when the idea of Paradise as the abode of souls in an intermediate state developed. The texts mentioned by Jeremias picture Paradise as being on high, a view that predominated. Paul located Paradise in the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2, 4, cf. Rev. 2:7). It is very unlikely therefore that Luke intended his readers to understand that Jesus "ascended" to Paradise at his death; in Acts 2:27,31 he clearly states that Jesus "descended". The significance of the statement of Luke 23:43 to the thief on the cross probably lies elsewhere.

[394] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 572, finds this text ambiguous, reflecting the ambiguity that existed in Jewish theological circles on the topic. Nonetheless, he favours a general resurrection on the grounds of Acts 24:15 and, perhaps, 20:36.

Luke rejected a resurrection for the wicked and a future judgement event for all are weak indeed.

Indeed, there is decisive evidence that Luke believed both in a resurrection for the wicked and in a future day of judgement. The most clear reference to this is found in Acts 24:15,[395] where Luke records Paul saying in his defence before Felix, "and [I] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust..." (a possible allusion to Dan.12:1-3). That text alone seems to bring down Milikowsky's categorical argument. H. Conzelmann believes that Luke included this saying specifically to combat a "righteous only" resurrection belief. He also maintains with considerable justification that the belief in a double resurrection was an integral part of the preaching to Gentiles citing Acts 17:18 and 31 as evidence.[396]

However, it is hardly necessary to venture into Acts to verify Luke's belief in a double resurrection. In Luke 11:29-32, a Q text,[397] we find Jesus warning the "wicked generation" of his time. According to 11:31, "The queen of the south will arise at the judgement with the men of this generation, and condemn them". Again in 11:32, "The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it." Both texts refer to a resurrection as the Greek verbs ἐγερθήσεται (11:31) and ἀναστήσονται (11:32) indicate;[398] they state that the queen of the south and the Ninevites "rise up with" this generation - an obvious reference to a double resurrection.[399] The "queen of the south" and the Ninevites are apparently righteous, the former because she went to great lengths to hear Solomon's wisdom, the latter because they repented at Jonah's preaching. In contrast, "the men of this generation" are wicked and receive condemnation because they have failed to believe in Jesus who is greater than both Solomon and Jonah. It is obvious that here Luke presupposes a resurrection that involves the wicked.

Having considered the evidence for belief in a double resurrection in Luke-Acts, we now look at evidence that he also believed in a future day of judgement rather than in individual judgement at death. The passage just examined (Luke 11:29-

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[395] See Knox, 14, on the scholarly consensus concerning the common authorship of Luke-Acts. Also Hawkins, 174-93 and Cadbury, *Style*, for arguments in favour of a common authorship.
[396] Conzelmann, 110-111,204-206.
[397] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 42,56.
[398] Both ἐγείρω and ἀνίστημι are commonly used to denote a resurrection. See Lk. 8:55; 9:8; 16:31; 18:33; Acts, 3:15; 5:30; 10:40 for some Lukan references. Cf. Bauer, 70,214.
[399] See J. Green, 465; Bovon, 2:201; Schürmann, 2:286.

32) refers in addition to a double resurrection, to the day of judgement that will follow. The phrase ἐν τῇ κρίσει ("in the judgement") occurs twice in verses 31 and 32. The definite article indicates a specific event rather than "judgement" in general.

A further passage referring to eschatological judgement is furnished by another Q text, Luke 10:10-15. Here we find a statement against the unbelief of Bethesda, Chorazin and Capernaum and a warning that they will suffer worse punishment than that meted out to Sodom or Tyre and Sidon. The mention of Sodom comes in 10:12, and of Tyre and Sidon in 10:14. 10:12 reads: "I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town." 10:14: "But it shall be more tolerable in the judgement for Tyre and Sidon than for you." The wording of these two verses is remarkably similar - in essence the thought of 10:12 is repeated in 10:14. With regards to the punishment, verse 12 refers to "that day" while 10:14 to "the judgement" – both times with the use of the definite article.[400] Both phrases evidently denote a future, single event of judgement, and it is obvious that in these parallel verses they mean the same thing, the one explaining and building upon the other. What we have here therefore is a clear reference to a future day of judgement during which whole cities will be held acceptable.[401]

In addition to the above passages, others in Luke are best understood in the context of belief in a future day of judgement and, indirectly, of a double resurrection. In a Q text in Luke 3 John the Baptist warns of the "coming wrath" where "every tree... that does not bear fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" (3:7,9). 3:17, which is also from Q, runs along similar lines; Jesus has come to "clear his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his granary," while "the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." In 9:26 Jesus warns that those who are ashamed of him now, he will be ashamed of them "when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels" - another incident in which judgement is seen as a future event that will take place after the parousia. Luke 9:26 (par. M. 8:38) retains from Mark the

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[400] Luke's double use of the definite article in 10:12,14 for the coming judgement contrasts with Matthew's construction. In the three verses (Mt. 10:15; 11:22,24) that correspond to Luke 10:12,14 Matthew uses the less specific phrase ἐν ἡμέρα κρίσεως. It is not clear if Luke's definite article is redactional, or if he retained it from his source, but either way his choice to include it indicates that Luke, as Matthew, was fully at home with the idea of an eschatological judgement event.

[401] It is very surprising that Milikowsky misses this obvious Lukan reference to both a double resurrection and a future collective judgement despite the fact that he directly refers to this text (Milikowsky, 243).

reference to judgement connected to the parousia in contrast to Matthew who clothes the condemnation in more general language.[402]

Final evidence for Luke's belief in an eschatological, post-resurrection judgement is provided by the context of the Gehenna passage under consideration - Luke 12:4-5. A. J. Mattil points out that practically the whole of Luke 12 deals with judgement.[403] Verses 2 -3 refer to things hidden and words spoken in secret that one day will be revealed, while verses 8-9, which in turn are related to 9:26, depict the Son of Man standing for his people and against those who reject him before the angels of God, and, presumably, God himself.

The weight of the evidence therefore brings us to acknowledge that Luke, like Matthew, anticipated a judgement that presupposes a resurrection for the wicked as well as the just. Moreover, there is no reason to doubt that the resurrection is corporeal. All the texts cited thus far contain no hint that anything but a bodily resurrection is in the author's mind. In Acts 24:15 it is the "dead" that rise, in Luke 11:29-32 the queen of the south and the Ninevites, and in Luke 10:10-15 the inhabitants of whole cities. In Luke 3:7,9 and 17 the language from nature is very vivid. In Luke 12:8, Jesus is pictured in the final judgement, as standing for and against people - those who stood and failed to stand for him respectively - not disembodied souls.[404] The most natural way to understand these resurrection/final judgement texts is that whole persons are involved, nothing less. This becomes even clearer as we look at Luke 12:4-5 below, where the presence of the body in judgement is prominent. Scharen is therefore correct when he writes that Milikowsky's attempt is "an imposing superstructure [that] has been erected on a somewhat meagre foundation".[405] We may conclude, therefore, that the general context of Luke 12:4-5 is not dissimilar to that of Matthew 10:28: bodily resurrection for the righteous and the wicked, followed by a final judgement. The difference in the wording between the two Q texts does not betray a radical differentiation in eschatological understanding between them, but more likely represents a difference in emphasis, as I shall proceed to explain.

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[402] Matthew "before my father in heaven" without qualifying the time when this will take place.
[403] Mattill, 3.
[404] Compare e.g. "every one who acknowledges me", with "the Son of Man also will acknowledge", where the third singular masculine pronoun αὐτῷ, refers back to the ὅς ἄν, which in turn refers to human beings in this life.
[405] Scharen, 463.

Comments on Luke 12:4-5

In this connection let us consider 12:4-5 closely. Verse 4 reads: "I tell you my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Those who can kill the body are obviously the persecutors whose authority is limited. Once they have killed the body, there is nothing more they can do. In Matthew 10:28 the limitation is expressed in qualitative terms: they may kill the body but not the soul. In Luke 12:4-5 the concept of the soul is absent[406] and the limitation is chronological, as the words "after that" imply. Once the persecutors have killed the body, their authority is terminated. After that there is nothing else they can do.

Verse 5 then reads: "But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has power to cast into Gehenna; yes I tell you, fear him." The "him" is definitely God.[407] While this is rather clear, there is some question about what the phrase "after he has killed" means. The Greek literally reads, "after killing" (μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτείναι). The Greek leaves the question of who does the killing open. Is it God who does the killing, or is it the persecutors of verse 4? Most English translations assume that it is God, and proceed to translate it "after he [God] has killed". Moulton disagrees and argues that the context would indicate that it is the persecutors of verse 4 who should be the subject of the infinitive in verse 5 thus reading, "after *they* have killed, he [God] has power to cast in Gehenna".[408] His conclusion stems from his assumption that God cannot be the one who kills. To strengthen his argument, he looks at the use of ἀποκτείνω in the New Testament and concludes that of its 74 occurrences, God is almost never the subject, except for Revelation 2:23 and 19:21 where God is only indirectly the subject. Moulton also maintains that the verb ἀπόλλυμι never has God as the subject except in two parables (Matthew 21:41; 22:7). His conclusion is that "there would seem to be no passage in the New Testament with direct reference to God physically killing anybody."[409] J. Fitzmyer also agrees with Moulton, adding that since after the killing

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[406] Bovon is of the opinion that Luke intentionally avoids the word "soul" is intentional (2:255), though it is more likely that Matthew has added it than that Luke has removed it.
[407] See the above discussion on Mt. 10:28.
[408] Moulton, "Luke," 246-7.
[409] Moulton, "Luke," 247.

of the body by humans, God throws into Gehenna, Luke may therefore be speaking of a post-mortem Gehenna.[410]

For several reasons Moulton's view is not correct. To begin with, he himself has pointed out that ἀποκτείνω even on few occasions,[411] is indeed used of God's activities. The same is true of the verb ἀπόλλυμι to a much larger extent that Moulton is willing to admit. I have already pointed out that ἀπόλλυμι is used nine times in relation to God's judgements,[412] and if we go to the LXX, the number of such usages increases dramatically.[413]

Furthermore, it is true that in Luke 12:5 there is no subject for the infinitive ἀποκτεῖναι. Clyde Votaw however, who has made a detailed study of the use of the infinitive in the Greek Bible, explains that "as a general rule, the subject is omitted when it is the same as the subject of the governing verb, or when it is the same as the object of the governing verb, or when by reason of its general, indefinite character, or its easy inference from some other portion of the sentence, it is sufficiently clear."[414] The first and last occasions verify that God is the subject of ἀποκτεῖναι: (a) He is the subject of the governing verb "has authority to cast" and (b) is the only subject in the sentence as Luke 12:4 consists of a sense unit with verse 5 proceeding to a new thought.

Additionally, the context further supports the notion that God, and not the persecutors, is the one who kills. The persecutors of verse 4 kill the disciples. Why then in verse 5, would God cast in Gehenna the disciples whom the persecutors have killed? We conclude therefore that in verse 4 the persecutors kill the disciples, but in verse 5 God kills those who have feared humans rather than God or maybe the persecutors themselves.

A second question arising from Luke 12:5 is whether ἀποκτεῖναι refers to the death in this life or death on the day of judgement. If the former, then Gehenna could be a place where a person goes immediately after death, as Milikowsky and Fitzmyer have suggested; if the latter, then the text envisions eschatological judgement. I have

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[410] Fitzmyer, 959.

[411] In addition to Rev. 2:23 and 19:21 where God is the subject of ἀποκτείνω, I would add Rev. 9:15 where God's agents, the angels are the subject.

[412] See the section on Mt. 10:28. Eleven times in the New Testament, God is directly, or indirectly (through the Flood for example, or the fire that burned Sodom) the subject of ἀπόλλυμι: Mt. 10:28; 21:41; 22:7; Mk. 12:9; Lk. 17:27; 17:29; 20:16; Jam. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:6; Jud. 5,11.

[413] E.g. Gen. 18:24,28; Lev. 7:10; 20:30; Deut. 2:21; Is. 1:25.

[414] Votaw, 32.

already explained above that in Luke's writings we have decisive evidence that the evangelist believed in a general eschatological judgement rather in individual judgement at death. One may be confident that the actual wording of verse 5 verifies this.

I have argued above, that ἀποκτείναι in verse 5 is done by God. This infinitive is in the active form – somebody (God) killing somebody. The very fact that God does the killing is noteworthy. According to Luke, in this temporal life, it is not God who takes away life but a variety of other powers: the ones who persecute the believers (Lk. 12:4), an angry synagogue crowd (Lk. 4:28), disease (Lk. 8:41-49), Herod (Lk. 9:9), a fall from a window (Acts 20:9), and many other natural or human causes. That in 12:5 God is specifically said to be the one who kills verifies the view that what we have here is a killing beyond the temporal killing – a killing that happens at the eschatological judgement when all natural and human factors that cause death cease to have authority and God himself has the prerogative to remove life.[415] If Luke had wanted readers to understand that he has temporal death in mind, he could have used a passive and more generic term that would not have pointed to God as doing the killing. He could have said for example, "after *death*" rather than "after *he has killed,*" as he has done on other occasions.[416]

In light of the above, we could therefore paraphrase Luke 12:4-5 as follows: "I tell you my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that there is nothing else that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after his turn has come (i.e. on the day of judgement), he will not only kill but will have authority to cast into Gehenna as well; yes I tell you, fear him."

It is interesting to note that what goes into Gehenna is that which God has already killed.[417] This is the exact sequence in Isaiah 66:24 where God first kills the disobedient Israelites and the unbelieving Gentiles, and then casts their corpses

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[415] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 515, though he accepts that God is the one who kills, thinks that the casting into Gehenna happens at death. Such a view not only contradicts other Lukan evidence, but also more importantly, is negated by the fact that what is envisaged here is not a normal death, but divine punishment on the day of judgement.

[416] Cf. the very similar construction in Acts 7:4 (μετὰ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν), where, as in Luke 12:5, the μετὰ τὸ is followed by the infinitive ἀποθανεῖν. Also Lk. 16:22; Acts 9:37; 21:13; 25:11.

[417] Luke does not clarify whether it is bodies, souls, or whole persons. Nonetheless, since in Luke 12:4 ἀποκτείνω is used with reference to persecutors killing whole persons – the disciples – it follows that the same may be the case in 12:5 – divine judgement on whole persons. This is verified by the thematic connection with Isaiah 66:24 where again it is whole persons that are destroyed. What is pictured in Luke 12:4, 5 therefore is resurrection and judgement of humans as a unity of body and soul.

outside Jerusalem to be consumed by fire and maggots. Fudge has actually suggested that Luke has edited the Q tradition under the influence of Isaiah 66:24.[418] This view merits further research. It is well known that Isaiah exerted a strong influence on the Gospel of Luke. Isaiah is the most commonly used book in Luke, (whether through quotation or allusion) followed by Psalms and Genesis.[419] James Sanders maintains that Luke must have been very well versed with the LXX or another Greek translation of the Old Testament.[420] It should not surprise us then if indeed somewhere behind Luke 12:5 lurks Isaiah 66:24. After all, Luke, who had before him the gospel of Mark, would have been aware of the connection between Gehenna and Isaiah 66:24 that Mark made.[421] If that is the case, then what God casts into Gehenna are not souls – the word soul does not enter at all into the picture. God casts out the dead corpses of the unbelievers, presumably to be consumed by fire.

Conclusion

In summary, we may conclude that Luke probably believed in a bodily resurrection for both the righteous and the wicked and also in an eschatological judgement. Luke 12:4-5 is to be understood within this framework. According to

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[418] Fudge, *Fire*, 177.

[419] Isaiah is the most commonly alluded to book in Luke (84 allusions) followed by the Psalms and Genesis (81 and 54 allusions respectively). The three New Testament books containing most allusions to Isaiah are Revelation, Matthew and Luke. Holtz, has observed that Isaiah, together with the twelve minor prophets and the Psalms are the Old Testament writings that exerted the most influence on Luke. Kimball, who has made a study of Old Testament exposition in the Luke, gives a list of quotations from and allusions to Isaiah. He cites seven direct quotations from Isaiah out of a total of 33 from the entire Old Testament, and 84 allusions to Isaiah out of a total of 525 (Kimball, 46-50,204-212). Kimball draws his information from the 26th edition of NA, which lists a total of 31 quotations and 494 allusions to the Old Testament and the UBS3, which lists 24 quotations but does not include allusions. Naturally there is an element of subjectivity as to what exactly constitutes an allusion or even a quotation. Thus other scholars estimates vary from as few as 15 by Ringgren, 227-36, to Archer and Chirichigno, who claim there are 30. The prominent position of Isaiah in Luke's quotations and allusions is, however, widely recognized.

[420] J. Sanders, 16.

[421] In this respect it is interesting to consider the Synoptic use of the verb βάλλω. It simply means "to throw" and is often used by Matthew in relation to judgement (3:10; 7:19;13:42,48,50). It is also used repeatedly in the Gehenna passages (5 times in Mt. 5:29 and 18:8,9 and twice in Mk. 9:45,47). In contrast Luke, though comfortable with the verb βάλλω (23 times), does not use it in relation to judgement except once (3:9) where he simply retains it from Q. Yet, in his only reference to Gehenna he uses it again (12:5), this time with the prefixed preposition ἐν – ἐμβάλλω ("throw into"). This could indicate that ἐμβάλλω here is redactional so that Luke, though using his Q source, was intentionally following the language of the Markan Gehenna pericope, and thus was aware of the direct connection to Isaiah 66:24 found there. The different form of the verb however (Lk. ἐμβάλλω, Mk. βάλλω) could testify against such a connection. Alternatively, it could be that Luke inherited both ἐμβάλλω and the indirect allusion to Isaiah 66:24 from Q. Since the connection to Isaiah is found both in Mark and in Q in different forms, it probably goes back to Jesus himself.

Luke, human authority is limited to temporal life – once humans kill a person, there is nothing else they can do. With God, however, it is different. When God's turn comes in the final judgement, God will not only kill unrepentant sinners, but will also cast their dead bodies to Gehenna. While Luke does not specify what Gehenna is, there is a thematic similarity with Isaiah 66:24. There, God kills the disobedient and casts them into the fire to be consumed. In Luke 12:4,5 God likewise kills the sinners and proceeds to cast them into Gehenna, presumably also to be consumed, but definitely not to be tortured. Luke's reference to Gehenna, therefore, while at first obscure and has thus been interpreted to be at variance with other Synoptic references, lives within the same current of tradition.

Summary and Conclusion on Gehenna

This short study Gehenna has revealed several things. With respect to the tradition-historical background we have seen that Gehenna was most likely not a garbage dump outside Jerusalem as is often assumed. The evidence for this is too late. Neither was the term Gehenna a common word used to designate the eschatological punishment of the wicked before the time of Jesus. The evidence from various relevant Jewish sources is dated towards the end of the first century AD at the earliest. Rather, it appears that Jeremiah was the only Hebrew prophet to link directly the valley of Ge-hinnom with the punishment of unfaithful Jews. The connection, which was anchored in a very specific *Sitz im Leben*, seems not to have caught on. The name Ge-hinnom continued to designate a geographical location, while all eschatological associations seem to have disappeared.

The first one who brought the eschatological elements of Ge-hinnom out of obscurity and used the term almost as a synonym for the judgement of the wicked was Jesus of Nazareth. His teaching must have exerted considerable influence on the Palestinian masses and his ministry, at least in the level of the gospels, often involved conflict and debate with the Pharisees. Thus it is no surprise that in the New Testament the word Gehenna appears mostly in works of Jewish origin - Matthew and James. It is possible that the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus, and later the Pharisees and the early Jewish-Christian community, generated a special interest in the concept of Gehenna within Jewish circles. This may be one reason why, beginning with the late first century AD, we see a growing association of the punishment of the wicked with Gehenna in such works as the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the pseudepigraphical writings.

Closer scrutiny of the Synoptics has revealed the following. Matthew shows a particular preference for Gehenna. He uses the word seven times, often with little comment, assuming a shared understanding with his readers. Matthew envisaged a judgement in Gehenna after a resurrection for the wicked to involve the totality of human existence - body and soul (10:28). He uses the word αἰώνιον to describe the fire of Gehenna (18:8), not to indicate that the fires will burn without end, but that the coming judgement is certain and final. The use of words like ἀπόλλυμι (10:28) and

the context of the Gehenna texts demonstrates that Matthew expected the wicked would die in the future judgement rather than be unendingly tormented.

Mark has important points of contact with Matthew. Marks refers to Gehenna only in one passage and proceeds to describe it for the sake of his readers with an allusion to Jewish scripture. Like Matthew, he expects that Gehenna will do its work after a resurrection of the wicked and that it involves the whole person - the emphasis on the fate of the body is noteworthy.

Luke contains the most ambiguous use of Gehenna. The only reason he retained the word at all was to be faithful to a Q saying of Jesus. While it has been suggested that he is interested in the soul and not the body and that he rejects both a resurrection for the wicked and a future day of judgement, the opposite is more likely to be true. Closer examination shows Luke believed both in a double resurrection and in a day of judgement and his Gehenna text must be interpreted within this context. Luke not only does not mention a soul, but his interest in the body is even stronger than in Matthew and Mark. For Luke, Gehenna nearly becomes, not so much a description of punishment, but the place where the slain bodies of the wicked are cast in order to be consumed - a picture strongly reminiscent of the Isaiah 66 motif.

The common elements among the three evangelists - strong emphasis on the body, judgement after a resurrection, annihilation rather than torment, strong Old Testament influence - all indicate that they ultimately drew their material from a common tradition.

Part II - Hades

Chapter VII

Background

Having discussed the function of Gehenna in the Synoptic gospels, we now turn our attention to another term that plays an important role in the descriptions of the great beyond – Hades. It was assumed for a long time that Hades and Gehenna were two names for the same concept.[422] This was partly due to the translation in the KJV of both terms by the English "hell",[423] and by the mistaken tendency to conflate the post-mortem condition of sinners with the eschatological punishment of the day of judgement. Today it is recognised however, that the two designations denote different things: Hades refers to the place where the dead go, and Gehenna to the eschatological fate of the wicked. At some point in the development of Christian and Jewish theology the two terms did become nearly synonymous. However, this development postdates the writings of the New Testament and is, at best, only anticipated in the writings considered for the purposes of this research.

In this part I intend to do the following. First we will briefly look at Hades in Greek literature, as it is a Geek term. We will then examine at more length its use in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and the New Testament outside the Synoptic gospels. Then we will concentrate on the Synoptic material, first discussing the two relevant Q texts (Mt. 11:20-24, Lk. 10:13-15), and then Matthew 16:17-19 which though unique to Matthew, is set in a context that is drawn from Mark.

Hades in Greek Literature

Hades comes for the verb to see, ἰδεῖν, and the negative prefix ἀ– meaning, "the place that is not seen". The name indicates the mysterious nature of the place of the dead; while the early Greeks had particular views about Hades, it was considered to be a place beyond the reach of any human. Thus, when Ulysses was told by Circe that he was to visit Hades and enquire of Tiresias, Ulysses' spirit was broken within

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[422] E.g. Brown, 295: "[Hades] comes in this case to much the same thing [as hell]".
[423] Cf. KJV Mt. 16:18; Mk. 9:43; Lk. 16:23.

him and he wept and writhed, for no man had been there and come back.[424] Once there, however, he was able to see the dead as shades and converse with them as with normal people.

For Greeks, Hades initially was the place in the heart of the earth where the souls of all the dead people went. When Ulysses arrives at Hades he meets both the noble dead of the Trojan war like Achilles[425] as well as notorious personalities like Cassandra, the prophetess of doom.[426] Though the souls of the dead were believed to carry on a meaningless existence, Hades initially was not a place of torments of any sort, with the exception perhaps of few individuals like Sisyphus who was force to carry a stone to the top of a hill only to see it roll down on the other side.[427]

In time, however, Hades came to be seen as a place of fire and torment to which evil personalities were thrown and through which the fiery river Pyriphlegethon flew.[428] Some of the relevant descriptions from Greek literature are discussed at more length below in the chapter on Luke 16:19-31.

Sheol in the Hebrew Scriptures/Hades in the LXX

Hades appears over a hundred times in the LXX. In most instances it translates the Hebrew שאול (henceforth "Sheol") while in some cases it also renders דומה, בור and derivatives of מות. In this chapter I shall refer to both the Hebrew and the LXX texts.

Sheol/Hades nowhere denotes a place of eschatological punishment. Rather, it refers to the place where every person goes at death.[429] There is no distinction between the righteous and the wicked. It becomes the home of respected figures like Jacob, Job or David[430] as well as of the bloodthirsty Joab or the idolatrous king of Babylon.[431]

In contrast to some cultures that envisioned meaningful existence in the afterlife, the Hebrew Bible portrays Sheol as a place of silence and lifelessness where human existence, for all practical purposes, has come to an end. The LXX follows

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[424] Homer, *Odys.* 10.495-503.
[425] Homer, *Odys.* 11.481-7.
[426] Homer, *Odys.* 11.421-4
[427] *Apol* 1.9.2.
[428] E.g. *Polyg.* 10.28-31; *Paus.* 1.17.5; 8.18.3.
[429] Bauckham, "Dead", ABD, 3:14.
[430] Eg. Gen. 37:35; 42:38; Job 14:13; 17:13; 1 Kgs. 2:9-10.
[431] 1 Kgs. 2:6; Is. 14:9-10.

closely on the Hebrew. Both the Hebrew and Greek of Job 7:6-9, for example, compare the person who goes to Hades to a cloud that vanishes: "As the cloud that vanishes,[432] so he who goes down to Sheol". A person's days come to an end without hope.[433] Once a person dies, the expectation for something better dies with him/her.[434] There is no memory in Hades;[435] neither is there any longer a communion with God.[436] It is a place of silence, darkness and oblivion.[437] Thus, a person who dies in effect ceases to exist.[438] Psalm 88:11 aptly notes: "Is thy steadfast love declared in the grave,[439] or thy faithfulness in [destruction][440]?" Ecclesiastes 9:5 is even clearer: "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing".[441]

Quite often, Hades is simply another name for the physical grave. This is evident in both the Masoretic and Septuagint passages. In Job 17:13 the writer reflecting on the fate he expects will soon befall him, complains that Hades has become his home; that his bed is the darkness.[442] The mention of a bed is an obvious reference to the custom of burying the dead in a lying position.[443] He then adds that the worm[444] and corruption have become his partners, meaning that the body will decompose and his existence will come to an end. In Job 21:26, the wicked who go down to Sheol/Hades sleep in the earth - another reference to the horizontal position of the body in the grave.[445] They are covered with worms and decomposition.[446] In Psalm 9:17 both the Hebrew and the Greek seem to reflect the language of Genesis 2:7 and 3:19 - the wicked are said to "return" to Sheol/Hades i.e. to the dust from

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[432] ὥσπερ νέφος ἀποκαθαρθέν... כלה ענן ילך כלהענן

[433] Greek, βίος μου... ἀπόλωλεν... ἐν κενῇ ἐλπίδι - life has vanished, has been lost in vain hope.

[434] Eg. Job 17:16; Eccl. 9:5.

[435] Eg. Is. 26:14; Eccl. 9:5; Ps. 6:5.

[436] Ps. 115:17; 88:10-12; Is. 38:18.

[437] Cf. Job 17:13; Ps. 88:5.

[438] Eccl. 9:6. In this respect it is no surprise that in two occasions (Ps. 94:17 and 115:17) Hades translates the Hebrew דומה, which carries the idea of "stillness" or "silence". Something similar can be said in the three texts (Job 33:22; Prov. 14:12; Is. 28:15) where it translates derivatives of מות ("death").

[439] קבר, τάφῳ.

[440] חבדון.

[441] יודעים מחומה, γινώσκοντες οὐδέν.

[442] The idea of darkness is also suggested in Job 38:17 where Hades translates the Hebrew צלמת usually rendered "darkness".

[443] Greek, ἅδης μου ὁ οἶκος, ἐν δὲ γνόφῳ... ἡ στρωμνή. The notion of a dead person in a horizontal position, often accompanied by the idea of sleeping, is common (eg. Job 14:13, 21:26, 26:6, Ps. 31:17, 88:5, Is. 14:8, 11, 18, Ez. 32:27). For a discussion of burial customs see Bloch-Smith (ABD, 1:785-9).

[444] Hebrew רמה, also used, for example, of the worms in rotting food in Ex. 16:24 (see Holladay, *Lexicon*, 340). LXX σαπρίαν ("corruption," "decay," rather than "worm").

[445] RSV: "They lie down alike in the dust, and the worms cover them."

[446] Greek, σαπρία δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐκάλυψεν.

which they had been formed.[447] In Psalm 16:10 Hades is where decay reigns.[448] The destiny of humans is not very different from that of animals.[449] In this respect, Hades is not a place of suffering; rather it is a place of lifelessness. The dead lie in silence. It is even said that they lie in peace.[450] Thus, Hades can be a synonym for the grave.[451]

A rather different motif emerges in Isaiah 14:9-10. Here the seer depicts a lively exchange between the king of Babylon who has descended in disgrace to Hades, and the rulers of the earth, whom he had unseated from their throne and who had descended before him. All of Hades is in upheaval to meet the king of Babylon, and the other kings are amazed that he has arrived so quickly. This lively motif, however, seems to be the embellished, metaphorical language of an eloquent poet, rather than anticipation of vibrant life in Hades.[452] 14:11 returns to the images alluded to above: in Hades, the glory and rejoicing that accompanied the king of Babylon while alive suddenly come to an end. With language reminiscent of the physical grave and the horizontal burial position, the writer explains that "maggots[453] are the bed beneath you and worms[454] are your covering".

The question of duration for the dead in Hades is more complicated. It is directly related to the question of resurrection. Until recently, it was generally assumed that resurrection appears only in the latest strata of Old Testament tradition, that is, well after the exile.[455] Today, a number of scholars concede the possibility that belief in a resurrection is reflected in earlier texts.[456] Job 14:11-17, 1 Samuel 2:6, Hosea 6:1 have been thought to be among such evidence. Apart from these, Daniel 12:2 is the closest to a general resurrection we have in the Old Testament. The Greek

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[447] A similar thought in expressed in the LXX of Job 17:16: ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπὶ χώματος καταβησόμεθα. The idea of death being a "return" to Hades echoes the frequent references of death as a return to the dust (e.g. Gen. 3:19, Num. 16:30, Job 7:21, 10:9 34:15, 40:13, Ps. 22:29, 30:9, Dan. 12:2).

[448] Greek, διαφθοράν.

[449] Ps. 49:14, 15, Eccl. 3:19, 20, 12:4.

[450] Job 21:13, ἀναπαύσει ᾅδου ἐκοιμήθησαν.

[451] Robertson, *Matthew*, 132.

[452] Poole, 358; cf. Watts, 209.

[453] רמה, σῆψιν.

[454] תולעה, σκώληξ.

[455] Martin-Achard, 183-222; Nickelsburg, "Resurrection," ABD 5:685-686.

[456] See Andersen and Freedman, 419-21; Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Netherworld in the Old Testament*; Dahood, 1:183,222-3; 2:xxvi-xxvii; 3:xli-xlx,218,299,305; cf. Hartain and Di Lella, 307-9.

of Psalm 88:5 could also imply some sort of regeneration when it says that God has not *yet* remembered the dead.[457]

On the basis of this brief overview of the relevant biblical material, several conclusions present themselves. First, Hades is the destiny of all humankind, righteous and wicked alike. Second, it is neither a place of torment nor of meaningful existence; rather it is where all normal functions associated with living beings have come to an end. Third, Hades is often associated with the physical grave. Fourth, there is no distinction between the material and the immaterial, the body and the soul; whole persons go there. Fifth, the duration of stay in Hades is not specified and depends largely on the possibility of an early belief in resurrection. It may, nevertheless, be said that by the time LXX translations were made belief in the resurrection was fast becoming an integral part of Jewish eschatological expectations; in this respect Hades could be regarded as the *temporary* abode of the dead.

Hades/Sheol in Early Jewish Literature

The picture in the other Jewish writings earlier than, or near contemporary to the New Testament is more complicated.

A number of documents use similar language to that of the Hebrew Scriptures. Sheol/Hades is commonly regarded as the destiny of all people, wicked and righteous alike. The Testament of Abraham A 8:9 portrays all people as gathered by the "sickle of death" and going to Hades.[458] There is also a frequent association between Hades and the dust. 2 Baruch 42:8 implies that all the dead are now lying in the dust. The Sibylline Oracles 1:81-84 depict Adam and his generation going to Hades and being covered by the earth. In SE 1 Enoch 51:1 (the Princeton Ethiopic 3 and EMML 2080 manuscripts) there is a parallel between the earth and Sheol.[459] In 2 Baruch 11:6 the dust is called upon to announce to the dead that they are happier in their state than those who are alive.[460] In the Thanksgiving Hymns of Qumran, Sheol resembles scriptural depictions. In 1QH 11 the poet offers thanks because God has saved his life from the pit, from Sheol and Abaddon.[461] In 1QH 11:19-23 the hope is expressed that

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[457] οὐκ ἐμνήσθης ἔτι.
[458] Cf T. Abr. A 19:7; BW 1 En. 22:1-14; SE 51:1; EE 102:5-11; 4 Ez. 4:42; 7:72.
[459] Nickelsburg, *Literature,* 70-78, 84-87, 112-129.
[460] Cf. Rev. 14:13.
[461] See 1QH 11:19-23.

God will "raise from the dust the worm of the dead to an [everlasting] community".[462] In 1 QH 14:34, those who "lie in the dust" are called to hoist a banner. And in 4Q Amram, Fragment 1ii 1-16, "the sons of dark[ness will go to the shades, to death] and to annihilation".[463]

A common motif that likewise links the dead to the earth is where resurrection is presented as the earth giving back the dead. In SE 1 Enoch 51:1 the earth, Sheol and destruction appear in parallel and give back the dead that have been entrusted to them. In 4 Ezra 7:32 the earth gives back those who sleep in it. In 2 Baruch 42:8 the dust is called to give back that which does not belong to it.[464]

Sometimes, the dead are described as being asleep without any consciousness, even being in peace. In the Epistle of Enoch (hence EE) 1 Enoch 102:5-11, for example, the righteous who have perished appear to become like "those who were not".[465] In Wisdom 2:1 a person comes to his/her end at death. In 4 Ezra 7:32 the dead are pictured as sleeping. In 2 Baruch 11:4 the righteous sleep "at rest in the earth".[466] In contrast, the sleep of the wicked is, at least once, called "haunted".[467] In Psalms of Solomon 14:9 the inheritance of the wicked is Hades, darkness and damnation, though it could be argued that this is meant to describe the final judgement. In the same work, at 2:2 people who die are as though they had never been.

In other ways, the picture is decidedly different from the Old Testament. Sometimes Hades, no more associated with the dust, becomes a hollow place in the earth.[468] Often, the bodies remain in the grave and what goes to these hollow places is the immaterial souls or spirits. The idea of soul "chambers" or "treasuries" is fairly frequent.[469] Often the chambers are common to all souls but at least in two instances the righteous are distinguished from the wicked. In BW 1 Enoch 22:1-14 the seer

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[462] Translation by Collins, *Apocalypticism*, 120.
[463] Translation by García Martinez, 275. Collins, *Apocalypticism*, 117-122, has agued that despite such references, the Dead Sea community anticipated bliss for itself and punishment for the wicked immediately after death (he cites 1 QS 4:6-8; 1 QS 4:11-14; 18-19). The question is not fully settled and it should be no surprise if in the Qumran literature that spans over two centuries of writing, both views should be present as is the case in other near contemporary Jewish literature.
[464] For a list and discussion of the relevant Jewish and Christian texts see Bauckham, *Fate*, 269-90.
[465] Nickelsburg, *Enoch*, 521, interprets the view expressed in 102:11 as "the effective annihilation of the person". This is the worldview the author of the passage ascribes to "sinners", and he then proceeds to counterargue that death is not annihilation, but a place of suffering for sinners (103:7-8) and of waiting for judgement (104:5).
[466] Cf. 2 Bar. 42:7.
[467] Ps. Sol. 17:14.
[468] 2 Bar. 21:23.
[469] Eg. Ps. Phil. 32:13; 15:5; 21:9; 2 Bar. 30:1; 4 Ez. 4:35.

sees four hollow places under the earth to which the souls go according to how good they were while alive. In Pseudo Philo 15:5 the place for wicked souls is called "chambers of darkness" which differentiates them from the "secret dwelling places of souls" (21:9) where apparently the remaining dead go.

Bauckham correctly observes therefore that there were two views on human fate in Jewish thought: the unitary and the dualistic. The unitary, he maintains, was "the simplest and doubtless the earliest Jewish notion" in which death was not seen as a separation of body and soul but rather as the death of the "bodily person".[470] The dualistic, in contrast, made a clear distinction between body and soul and seems to have been influenced by Platonic dualism. However, scriptural influence meant that the distinction between body and soul did not reach the extent it did in Greek thought and often the unitary and dualistic approaches appear alongside one another in Jewish writings.[471]

With regards to resurrection, in the Old Testament the idea is at best obscure. In the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha it plays a much more central role.[472] A characteristic text is 4 Ezra 4:42 where "the earth"[473] is compared to the womb of a pregnant woman, anxious to deliver what has been committed to it. The dust will give back what does not belong to it.[474] Sheol will return the deposits she received.[475] In 2 Baruch 50:2 the dead return to life in exactly the same form in which they died. In such instances Hades or Sheol is only a temporary home for the dead or their souls. It is not a place of punishment; rather punishment will come in the day of judgement. After the resurrection, Hades itself will cease, the realm of death will be sealed and its mouth will be shut.[476]

In a number of documents however, Hades becomes the place of eschatological punishment. Jeremias links this development with the penetration into Palestine of the belief in the inherent immortality of the soul.[477] The tradition of associating Hades with the final abode of the wicked is present but not dominant in extra-canonical Jewish literature. It is probably anticipated in texts like BW 1 Enoch

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[470] Bauckham, *Fate*, 275.
[471] Bauckham, *Fate*, 276-7.
[472] Nickelsburg, *Literature*, 84-87, 112-129
[473] So the Ethiopian and Georgian; the "chambers of the earth" in the Armenian (Stone, *Ezra*, 91).
[474] 2 Bar. 42:8.
[475] SE 1 En. 51:1.
[476] 2 Bar. 21:23; Ps. Philo 3:10.
[477] Jeremias, TDNT, 1:147.

22:1-14 and Pseudo Philo 15:5 and 21:9 that differentiate between the wicked and the righteous in Hades. In Jubilees 7:29 Sheol becomes the place of punishment, though the association with death in the same verse leaves open the question about whether temporal or eschatological punishment is meant. In Pseudo Phocylides 112-113 Hades is the eternal home for all not because of a coming day of judgement but on account of the soul's innate immortality – it goes to Hades and stays there forever. Finally, in SE 1 Enoch 63:10 and EE 103:7 Sheol is considered an oppressive place of torment, which, at least in the latter text, could be said to last forever.[478]

By way of summary, we may say that in some ways the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha reflect Old Testament thinking and language. However, several developments are evident, namely: an increasing emphasis on resurrection; growing differentiation between body and soul; greater differentiation between the righteous and wicked; an incipient tendency to view Hades as the place of final punishment – a view anticipated but not completely developed.

Hades in the New Testament

The word Hades occurs eleven times in the New Testament - four in the Synoptic gospels, two in Acts and five in Revelation. The Synoptic references will be discussed in more detail below. Having looked at Hades in the background material, it will be useful to see briefly how the word is used elsewhere in the New Testament.

The first relevant texts are Acts 2:27 and 31. The former is a quotation from Psalm 16:10; the latter contains Peter's comments on that text. In light of the common authorship of Luke and Acts, these two texts become especially important. Their context is Peter's sermon on Pentecost. The meaning of Psalm 16:10 in its original context is not altogether clear. It could be simply a prayer expressing confidence that God will deliver from death, or it might reflect a hope in a future resurrection.[479] In Acts, however, it is interpreted as an unambiguous reference to resurrection. The author assumes Psalm 16 was written by David.[480] However, even though David had died and was buried, he had not risen; on the contrary, his grave was still intact in Jerusalem.[481] Therefore, the text in Psalms could apply not to David, but to David's

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[478] Nickelsburg, *Enoch*, 511, translates 103:8b as follows: "...and the great judgement will be for all the generations of eternity".
[479] Craigie, 1:158.
[480] The Masoretic text ascribes this psalm to David.
[481] Acts 2:29.

offspring, the Messiah; the quotation is introduced with the words: "David said about him [Jesus]".[482] The text is interpreted in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus – David is still in the grave; Jesus descended but has returned. Here therefore, Hades is the equivalent of the Old Testament Sheol, the abode of the dead, and not a place of punishment.

The next reference is Revelation 1:18. In a vision Jesus, who walks among seven lampstands, is described in terms of his resurrection: "I died, and behold I am alive for evermore" (18a). On this account he is said to possess the keys of death and Hades.[483] He is also called "the living one," a title often used of God in both the Old and New Testaments.[484] It suggests that unconquerable life is inherent in the divine person and, in this respect Jesus has full power over death and resurrection.[485] This aspect of the person of Jesus brings to mind Old Testament texts that declare God's lordship over Sheol.[486] Here, death and Hades appear synonymous and this close juxtaposition between life on the one hand and death/Hades on the other suggests biblical influence. Since Hades appears in the context of Jesus' resurrection and could suggest the power of God to revive believers who had died, we have to conclude that Hades here represents temporal, in contrast to eschatological, death.

In Revelation 6:8 death and Hades appear again together personified. John sees in vision a number of apocalyptic horses and riders bringing woes upon the earth. The fourth horse is pale in colour (the Greek χλωρός is literally a yellow-green pale). Robertson suggests the colour is a symbol of death and the terror it brings;[487] Massyngbearde Ford that it could depict a corpse in an advanced state of corruption.[488] The rider of this horse is death who in turn is followed by Hades. The Greek for death is θάνατος, which in the LXX often translates דבר which means "pestilence" rather than "death". Hence, a number of commentators have proposed that what is pictured here is possibly a pestilence followed by death.[489] Two elements weigh against such a suggestion. First, in Revelation Hades always appears together

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[482] Δαβὶδ γὰρ λέγει εἰς αὐτόν. Cf. 2:30-31.
[483] Beasley-Murray, 68. Jesus also has the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 16:19), which he bestows to Peter (Mt. 16:19) and to other believers (Mt. 18:18).
[484] Eg Deut. 5:26; Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:16; 2 Kgs. 19:4; Is. 37:4,17; Jer. 10:10; John 5:26; 11:25; 14:6; Rev. 4:9; 10:6; 15:7.
[485] Massyngbearde Ford, 55.
[486] E.g. 1 Sam. 2:6; Job 11:8; Deut. 32:39; Hos. 6:1-3.
[487] Robertson, *Revelation*, 342.
[488] Massyngbearde Ford, 57.
[489] Beasley-Murray, 133.

with death[490] and the combination seems to be a hendiadys. Second, pestilence is mentioned as one of the four means through which death comes about (6:8c), so it would not make sense for the revelator to have pestilence represent both the rider of the horse and one of his weapons. Revelation 6:8 mentions four elements through which death and Hades collect their booty: sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts. The imagery is drawn from Ezekiel 14:21 where the prophet threatened divine punishment on Jerusalem. These four elements bring catastrophic death to a fourth of the inhabitants of the earth. Hades therefore simply functions as a synonym for death in the temporal sense.

Finally, in Revelation 20:13-14 Hades and death appear together in an eschatological context. At the command of God (20:11), they return the dead buried within them in a general resurrection. It is noteworthy that the sea is also called to give back those who have died within her bounds. In 13:1 the sea is the domain from which a beast rises, which causes the world to worship the dragon and itself (13:4) and contents against the saints of the Most High (13:7). In 20:11 the sea may have a different function. Beasley-Murray suggests that ancient traditions and burial customs lie behind the mention of both Hades/death and the sea giving back their dead.[491] In the ancient Near East it was very important for the family of a deceased to ensure that a dead relative received a proper and honourable burial.[492] Those who had died at sea obviously did not get such a burial. The text might therefore suggest that both those who received a honourable burial and those who perished at sea will have a place in the resurrection.[493] The juxtaposition of Hades and the sea may also suggest that Hades is on dry land, a reminder perhaps of the close association between Hades and the dust in the Hebrew Scriptures and some extra-canonical Jewish writings. In this sense, the sea and Hades taken together underline the universality of the resurrection[494] – sea and land cover the whole face of the earth and therefore everybody who died will be resurrected.[495] This universality is strengthened by the Greek ἕκαστος ("each one," or "every one") which in 20:13 explains who will be at the judgement. In its present form therefore, the mention of the sea has a twofold

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[490] Rev. 6:8; 20:13,14.
[491] Beasley-Murray, 302.
[492] Bloch-Smith, ABD, 1:785-9.
[493] Beasley-Murray, 302.
[494] So Mounce, 366.
[495] A.F. Johnson, 589-90.

function: first, it assures readers that all the faithful, even those who died and whose bodies were lost, will be remembered by God; second the universal scope of the resurrection means that none of the wicked will escape God's judgement.

In 20:14 death and Hades meet their end when they are thrown into the lake of fire, which, in turn, is called "the second death". This creates a curious picture: death meets an end through death. The phrase "second death" deserves a brief comment. It appears three more times in Revelation[496] and in all cases refers to the eschatological punishment that awaits the wicked but not the righteous. It also occurs in targumic traditions in the context of the world to come and, in one case, Gehenna.[497] The picture of Revelation 20:14 therefore is not so much of a personified death/Hades who is thrown into the fire and dies; rather Hades comes to an end when the wicked die the second death - there is nobody else to die so death becomes defunct.[498]

From the above discussion of Acts 2:27-31 and the Hades texts of Revelation, we can say that here Hades is always the temporary abode of the dead until the day of judgement - a motif consistent with belief in a resurrection. Imagery and allusions from the Hebrew Scriptures are strong. Hades is not a place of suffering nor are the righteous separated from the wicked. There is no hint of consciousness in Hades neither is the opposite stated explicitly. There does seem to be a correlation between Hades and the dust in Revelation 20:13 and the physical grave in Acts 2:27-31; in these texts, the notion of Hades follows closely earlier biblical concepts and has missed out on some developments reflected in the early Jewish material.

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[496] Rev. 2:11; 20:6; 21:8.
[497] Neof. Deut. 33:6; Tg. Isaiah 22:14; 65:6,15.
[498] Compare with 2 Bar. 21:23 and Ps. Philo 33:3 where Hades' mouth is sealed forever.

Chapter VIII

Matthew 11:20-24 and Luke 10:12-15

Matthew 11:20-24

> [20]"Then he began to upbraid the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. [21]Woe to you, Chorazin! woe to you, Beth-saida! for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. [22]But I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgement for Tyre and Sidon than for you. [23]And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. [24]But I tell you that it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgement for the land of Sodom than for you."

"Hades" appears a total of four times in the Synoptics. The saying on Hades in Matthew 11:23 occurs in a small pericope (11:20-24) from Q[499] in which Jesus pronounces a woe on three cities of Galilee because they have failed to believe in him. The woes, in turn, appear in the general context of 11:2-30, which may be divided into three parts: Jesus' work in relation to (a) John the Baptist (2-19), (b) its apparent failure (20-24), and (c) its real success (25-30).[500] The main theme of this unit seems to be the acceptance or rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.[501] John the Baptist has accepted him and receives words of praise (11:3, 11); so have the "infants", the simple folk (11:25). However, the "wise and understanding" have rejected first John the Baptist and now Jesus (11:16-19, 25). The woes against Chorazin, Beth-saida and Capernaum (11:20-24) therefore serve as a warning to all who reject Jesus.

The woes are pronounced within the context of eschatological punishment. 11:20 does not appear in Luke and is probably redactional, added by Matthew to function as an introduction to the woes. It is a prelude to the final judgement. The word "woe" itself connotes a solemn warning of imminent threat.

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[499] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 67, 73, 120, 147-8, 258, 388.
[500] Allen, 113.
[501] Davies and Allison, 2:265.

Matthew 11:21-22 derives directly from Q and the final judgement plays a prominent role. Chorazin and Beth-saida[502] are condemned because they have failed to believe the divine manifestations of power in Jesus. By contrast, if Tyre and Sidon had seen the works Jesus did in these Galilean cities, they would long have repented. The mention of Tyre and Sidon injects a touch of irony and points to the magnitude of the guilt of the Galilean cities – these two cities on the coast of Lebanon were not only Gentile, but are repeatedly condemned for their wickedness by the Hebrew prophets.[503] Thus, even the notoriously evil Gentiles would have been more receptive to Jesus' ministry than the chosen people of God. The solemn warning of Jesus is that in the day of judgement, Tyre and Sidon will carry a lighter sentence than the one to be pronounced on Chorazin and Beth-saida.

11:23-24 carries a similar warning phrased differently. This time the juxtaposition is between Capernaum and Sodom. 11:24 is probably redactional[504] and repeats the idea of 11:22 – namely that the unrepentant inhabitants of Capernaum will receive a heavier sentence than those of Sodom who did not hear and see Jesus. 11:23b is modelled on the saying concerning Tyre and Sidon in 21b. It sets the stage for the mention of Sodom in 24. In this respect, 11:23-24 has a distinctly Matthean colouring in contrast to Luke who seems to retain the original formulation of Q more accurately.

The question of most interest in relation to our topic is this: since 11:23 condemns Capernaum to Hades could it be that Hades here represents the place of punishment of the day of judgement? I am of the opinion that in its present Matthean form, it does not. While 11:24 refers to the day of judgement, the emphasis in 11:23 lies elsewhere.

11:23a condemns Capernaum in language taken from Isaiah 14:13-15.[505] The oracle of Isaiah is directed against Babylon and her king (14:3). She is destined to go

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[502] Beyond this verse (and Lk. 10:13), we know little about the work of Jesus in these two cities. Except for a couple of references in Jewish writings (*b. Menah.* 85a; *t. Mak.* 3:8), Chorazin is nowhere else mentioned among the ancient writers. Beth-saida was said to be the native town of Peter and Andrew and also of Philip (John 1:44; 12:21). It lay in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee and must have been a large village since Herod Philip made it into a city and renamed it Julias. The feeding of the 5000 is said to have taken place nearby (Lk. 9:10,25) and it was also the sight of a healing miracle (Mk. 8:22-26).

[503] Eg. Jer. 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Joel 3:4; Zech. 9:1-4; cf. 1 Mac. 5:15; Jdt. 2:28.

[504] 11:24 is also from Q and has already appeared in Mt. 10:15 in a different context. In Luke it is linked to Matthew 10:15 rather than 11:24 which suggests that Matthew has chosen to reuse this saying in order to make a parallel to 11:22.

[505] Gundry, *Old Testament*, 81.

down to Hades because in her pride she aspired to the glory of God (14:13-14) and brought suffering to the nations around her (14:6-8,12,16-17,20). The oracle reflects the destruction of Babylon said to be brought about not by human arms but by God's power (14:5,22). Her king descends to Hades where he meets other potentates of old who are amazed to see him there (14:9-12).[506] The name of Babylon will be wiped out and so will her people (14:22); as for the land, it will become unfit for habitation (14:23).

Capernaum is thus indirectly compared to Babylon. Capernaum esteemed herself to be as high as the heavens[507] but will end up in Hades. In contrast, if the mighty works done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom, the latter would still be around.[508] The focus of the saying is that if Sodom had seen the works of Jesus, she would have repented, and having repented, would not have been destroyed. 11:23 therefore concern the temporal destruction of Sodom. Unlike Sodom, Capernaum has had the opportunity to hear Jesus and see his mighty works but still has not repented. Capernaum, therefore, can expect a similar fate. Camber's suggestion that here is an allusion to Capernaum's temporal destruction during the great Jewish War of AD 66-70 thus appears valid.[509] It seems that in 11:23 Matthew has redacted the Q saying to refer to the temporal destruction of Capernaum while supplying 11:24 to create a parallel to 11:22, which alludes to the eschatological destruction of the unrepentant cities of Galilee. Since the saying about Hades comes in 11:23 in relation to the temporal fate of Sodom, it is likely that it denotes the temporal fate of Capernaum.

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[506] See discussion above on Hades in the LXX.

[507] The exact meaning of the Greek here is unclear. The Greek sets the phrase in the form of a question: "Will you exalt yourself to heaven?" There is a textual problem: two variants of the verb ὑψόω ("to exalt"), both of which have strong manuscript support. The first, ὑψωθήση, which NA prefer, is active and suggests that Capernaum attempted to exalt herself. The second, ὑψωθεῖσα is passive and conveys that the city had been raised by other factors. Why exactly Capernaum would have considered herself exalted is not clear. Perhaps it had to do with geographical position, or that it was a rich city, or that it was a matter of pride. A likely possibility is its importance came from the extensive ministry of Jesus there since the "woes" passage deals with the cities that rejected Jesus. It appears to have been the centre of Jesus' Galilean work (Mt. 4:13, Mk. 2:1); Jesus healed several people there (Mt. 8:5, Mk. 1:21-28, 2:1-12, Lk. 7:1-10, John 4:41-54) and taught in its synagogues (Lk. 4:31-38).

[508] This is the force of the Greek, ἔμεινεν ἂν μέχρι τῆς σήμερον. Here is an allusion to the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19).

[509] Camber, 500.

Luke 10:12-15

> [12]I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town [that has rejected Jesus' disciples]. [13]Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Beth-saida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. [14]But it shall be more tolerable in the judgement for Tyre and Sidon than for you. [15]And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades.

The "woes" pericope examined above corresponds to Luke 10:12-15.[510] The context in Luke is somewhat different: Jesus is sending out the seventy in order to prepare the way for him (10:1).[511] 10:3-12 contains directions about how the disciples should conduct their mission work, as well as the prospect that their ministry will be rejected (10:10-12). 10:16 concludes Jesus' mission charge. Framed within this context, the "woes" pericope appears out of place. While the sending of the seventy aims to prepare the cities to receive Jesus, the woes suggest that Jesus has already ministered among the named cities of Galilee and his work has been rejected.[512] It is probable that Luke has transposed this small pericope from another context and placed it within Jesus' mission charge to the seventy in order to impress upon readers the grave danger of rejecting Jesus. In this respect, the woes add a note of drama to a context that is positive and joyful.[513]

10:12, 13 and 14 are practically identical with Matthew 11:24 and 21-22 respectively, which have already been discussed above. It suffices here to remember that Chorazin and Beth-saida are to receive greater punishment than Tyre and Sidon[514] in the day of judgement because they have rejected Jesus. The punishment is eschatological. The statement is heavily rhetorical and intends to create a mood of shame[515] perhaps even lead to repentance.

The part of the pericope of more immediate interest is 10:15, which contains the saying about Hades.[516] This is also the point of divergence between Matthew and Luke. While Matthew enriches the statements about Capernaum through a

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[510] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 86, 94, 119-120, 147-148.
[511] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 443ff.
[512] Ellis, *Luke*, 154.
[513] Lk. 10:17,21.
[514] For prophecies against Tyre and Sidon see Ez. 26:20 and 28:1-19. Cf. Schürmann, 2:81.
[515] Bock, 1003.
[516] Bovon, 2:56 and Schürmann, 1:80, suggest that perhaps the influence of Is. 14:14-15 lies behind Lk. 10:15.

redactional comparison with Sodom, Luke, probably retaining the more original Q wording, concludes with the simple statement that Capernaum will be brought down to Hades.[517] Is Hades here the place of temporal death as is the case with Matthew, or is it a reference to eschatological punishment?

Bock opts for the latter option. He envisages this utterance being fulfilled at the final judgement with Capernaum destined for Hades.[518] Schürmann rather sees it as an equivelant to the Abyss where the wicked dead are, and the opposite of heaven.[519] Alternatively, it could simply be a metaphorical expression that Capernaum's pride will be humbled, in which case Hades functions simply as the opposite extreme of heaven.[520] Or it could reflect Capernaum's destruction in the rebellion against Rome, as is the case in Matthew. Contextually, it is difficult to draw foolproof conclusions and is best to leave the question open.

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[517] J. Green, 416, mistakenly asserts that Jesus here compares Chorazin, Bethsaida *and* Capernaum with Sodom. The comparison stands true only for the first two cities; the statement on Capernaum is independent and not related to Sodom.

[518] Bock, 1004 (cf. Bovon, 2:56). The way Bock arrives at this conclusion is wrong, since he associates Hades with the place where the unrighteous reside *after* the judgement. He thus mistakenly conflates Hades with Gehenna. Hades most commonly relates to the temporal abode of the dead before the judgement.

[519] Schürmann, 2:81.

[520] See Is. 7:11, though admittedly, Hades is not used here.

Chapter IX

Matthew 16:13-20

> [13]Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" [14]And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." [15]He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" [16]Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." [17]And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. [18]And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death [gates of Hades] shall not prevail against it. [19]I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." [20]Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. [21]From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

One of the more controversial uses of Hades is found in Matthew 16:18. The saying appears on the lips of Jesus in the context (16:13-20) of a dialogue between the disciples and Jesus concerning his messianic identity. This incident happens at Caesarea Philippi shortly before Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem. The pericope comes from Mark 8:27-30 and is also reproduced in Luke 9:18-21. Matthew 16:17-19, however, is not found in the other two Synoptics and this has raised discussion as to whether it formed part of the original tradition or was by Matthew or his source from a different setting. The unity of 16:17-19 has also been questioned and the possibility that it combines three originally independent sayings has been proposed. Davies and Allison have devoted considerable space in discussing these issues and their conclusion is that, in all likelihood, Matthew's version, with the three controversial verses, is earlier than Mark's. [521] I will not discuss these issues here but proceed on the assumption that the pericope 16:13-20, as it stands, is a unit. Even if not, the fact that the redactor has presented it as a unit means that only by studying it

[521] Davies and Allison, 2:602-615.

as a unit that we can one gain a clearer glimpse on the function of Hades as presented by the evangelist.

Though several exegetical questions arise and are discussed in many commentaries, my purpose here is rather specific: to discern and determine the function of the reference to Hades. I will therefore limit my analysis to three issues, namely, (1) the central theme of this passage, (2) the precise identity of the rock on which the church will be built, and (3) the function of Hades in relation to (1) and (2).

The central theme of the pericope

Discussions of the pericope usually centre on the words of Jesus to Peter and the statements concerning the founding of the church.[522] While this is understandable, there is a danger of missing the primary focus of the pericope. In Mark and Luke, this focus is, without doubt, the messianic identity of Jesus. In Mark, after a short narrative introduction, the pericope begins with the question Jesus poses to the disciples: "Who do men say that I am?" (Mk. 8:27). After a brief discussion in which Peter, possibly expressing the conviction of the rest,[523] confesses him to be the Christ, the pericope closes with an admonition to the disciples "to tell no one about him" (8:30). Luke follows a similar pattern with slight editorial adjustments (Lk. 9:18-20).

Matthew's version, though enriched with verses 17-19 concerning the establishment of the church, does not depart from the main focus, the messianic identity of Jesus.[524] On the contrary, some redactional elements might imply that Matthew wanted to place an even greater emphasis on this question. Thus, in place of Mark's "I am" in the question, Matthew has substituted the title Son of Man – "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?"[525] While the reason behind this editorial

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[522] Davies and Allison, 2:617-25; Fenton, 265-9; Barret, 87-8; Hagner, 470; Gundry, *Matthew*, 329-30.

[523] That Peter is expressing a conviction shared by the other disciples is suggested by the form the discussion takes: Jesus asks *them* (disciples), Peter replies, then Jesus admonishes *them* rather than Peter, not to say anything about his identity.

[524] Fenton, 264-9.

[525] The phrase "Son of Man" has been discussed at length and opinions are divided both concerning its authenticity, and its meaning (for an overview see Marshall, "Son of Man", 67-87). Vermes, 123-34, has argued that in all authentic sayings of Jesus, the phrase is a substitute for "I". Perhaps a majority of commentators considers it a messianic title (eg. Hagner, 214-5; Marshall, DJG, 775-81; Davies and Allison, 2:617). The phrase "son on man" occurs 93 times in Ezekiel as a reference to the prophet and 14 times in poetic writings also to refer to human beings. In Daniel 7:13 it occurs not as a title, but as a description ("one like a Son of Man") of a heavenly being. He receives royal power, dominion and glory. His relation to Israel is analogous to that of Michael and his "people" (Dan. 12:1). In SE it depicts a messianic figure (cf. chs. 46-7) which Nickelsburg ("Resurrection", ABD 6:137-142) argues, derives primarily from Daniel 7:13. In the New Testament it occurs solely on the lips of Jesus as a self-designation, and always with the definite article. He, like the heavenly figure of Daniel 7:13, is

adjustment is difficult to identify with certainty, Davies and Allison have plausibly suggested that Matthew wanted to bring together three messianic titles of Jesus – Messiah, Son of Man and Son of God.[526]

Then in 16:14, the disciples explain that people thought Jesus was one of the prophets of old. Jesus' next question, which appears in the same format in all three Synoptic versions, is emphatic: "But who do *you* say that I am?"[527] The contrast is obvious. While the masses considered Jesus to be nothing more than a prophet, the way Jesus addresses the question to the disciples indicates that he expects a different, more profound, answer: Jesus is not just a prophet but the anointed of God.[528]

The strong emphasis of Matthew on the messianic identity is further expressed in another editorial comment in 16:16. According to Mark, in answer to Jesus' question Peter simply replies, "You are the Christ".[529] Luke leaves out the emphatic "you are" and records Peter as saying, "the anointed of God".[530] In contrast, Matthew has the most emphatic version of the answer: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."[531]

Furthermore, at the pericope's conclusion where Jesus admonishes the disciples to keep silent about what has been said, Matthew again redacts his source in order to stress the messianship of Jesus. Thus, Mark says that the disciples should "say nothing about him [Jesus]," (Mk. 8:30),[532] while Luke that they should not tell anyone (Lk. 9:21).[533] Matthew, in contrast, has Jesus admonishing the disciples not to tell anyone *that he is the Messiah* (Mt. 16:20).[534]

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likewise a royal figure (Mt. 21:4,9) who receives dominion and glory (Mt. 24:30; 26:64; cf. Mk. 13:26; 14:62; Lk. 22:69). These last references are direct allusions to Daniel 7:13, which suggests that for the Synoptic writers, Jesus is the heavenly figure of Daniel 7:13. See, Nickelsburg, "Resurrection", ABD 6:137-150. Additionally, Marshall, DJG 776, notes on two occasions when Jesus is identified by others as the Messiah, he replies with a Son of Man saying (Mk. 8:29-31; 14:61-2). The phrase is nowhere in the gospels or the rest of the New Testament used of others. The above suggest that at least for the Synoptic evangelists, the Son of Man was a title closely related to Jesus' messianic identity.

[526] Davies and Allison, 2:617.

[527] ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι;

[528] Gundry, *Matthew*, 329.

[529] σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός.

[530] τόν χριστόν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

[531] Gundry, *Matthew*, 330, notes that the title "Son of God" characterizes Matthew's Christology, and anticipates the statement that Peter has received divine revelation, because it is only through revelation that Jesus can be recognized as such (Mt. 11:25-27).

[532] μηδενὶ λέγωσιν περί αὐτοῦ.

[533] μηδενὶ λέγειν τοῦτο.

[534] μηδενὶ εἴπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός.

Finally, it is worth noting the importance of this pericope in the unfolding of Jesus' identity. All three evangelists, Matthew more so than the other two, have already repeatedly stated their conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.[535] Yet, the incident in Caesarea Philippi is the first instance that followers of Jesus acknowledge this identity. In this respect, Caesarea Philippi marks a turning point in the relationship between Jesus and the disciples; Jesus can now tell them boldly of his coming death and resurrection. This is especially so in Matthew; 16:21 begins with the phrase, "from that time..." indicating a change in circumstances.

We can therefore state with confidence that the inclusion in Matthew of verses 17-19 in no way detracts from the central theme of the pericope, Jesus messianic identity. On the contrary, Matthew has edited his source in ways to make this even more pronounced. Therefore, the sayings about founding the church in 16:17-19 are of secondary importance. The relationship of these verses to the rest of the pericope will become significant as we proceed to examine the rock and the gates of Hades of 16:18.

The rock on which the church will be built

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus foretells that he will build his church upon a rock. This saying has since become an issue of great controversy about who the rock is. Is it Peter who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah? Or is it Jesus?

Davies and Allison opt for the former possibility.[536] They suggest that behind this saying lies the influence of Isaiah 51:1-2 about Abraham being a rock from which Israel had been hewn. In this respect, Peter becomes the father of a new Israel, the Christian Church, in the same way that Abraham was the father of the old Israel. They furthermore suggest that name change from Simon Bar Jonah to Peter, mentioned for the first time in this gospel, echoes the change of Abraham and Sarah's names that accompanied the promise that Abraham would become the father of a great nation. It possibly also reflects the name change of Jacob to Israel.[537]

This interpretation of Matthew 16:28 in light of Isaiah 51:1-2 and Genesis has a number of weaknesses. First, there is no direct evidence that Isaiah 51:1, 2 played

[535] Mt. 1:1,16,17,18; 2:4; 11:2; Mk. 1:1; Lk. 2:11,26; 3:15-16; 4:41.
[536] Davies and Allison, 2:625. Fenton, 265-9, takes a similar view on the grounds of Matthean editorial adjustments of Mark to enhance the role of Peter (10:2; 14:28-32; 15:15; 17:24-27; 18:21) as well as other gospel traditions (Lk. 22:31-34; John 21:15-22). Such adjustments and traditions do not establish the primacy of Peter to the point of making him the foundation of the church.
[537] Gen. 17:3-8,15-16; 32:27-28.

any role in the formation of ecclesiology among early Christians. In contrast, a number of other texts like Psalm 118, Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 that mention a rock, did.[538] Furthermore it is not certain that the rock of Isaiah 51:1-2 was understood to be Abraham. Instead, the emphasis of that text is for Israel to look to the Lord who will comfort Zion. In light of the many references in Isaiah where God is metaphorically portrayed as the Rock of Israel[539] it seems plausible that the rock of Isaiah 51:1-2 is the Lord rather than Abraham. It appears therefore rather forced to single out Isaiah 51:1-2 as the guiding influence behind Matthew 16:18.

The suggestion that the rock is Peter meets with other serious difficulties as well. Nowhere else in early Christian writings is Peter said to be the foundation of the Church. The closest such association would be Galatians 2:9 where Peter is called a "pillar". However, in this text Peter appears on an equal footing with James and John with James mentioned first. Moreover, there is a considerable difference between a pillar and the foundation stone. C. K. Barrett has, in turn, suggested that 1 Corinthians 3:11 could imply Peter was thought to be the foundation of the Church prompting Paul to refute the claim.[540] Barrett's suggestion goes beyond exegesis to speculation. The problem in Corinth was not excessive attention to Peter but simple factionalism (1 Cor. 1:11-15). While there can be little doubt that Peter played a prominent role in the early Church, other individuals were equally prominent (Acts 15:13; Gal. 2:12).

Furthermore, the association of Peter with the rock poses two questions concerning the syntax of Matthew 16:17-19. First, the name Πέτρος is masculine whereas the noun πέτρα on which the Church will be built is feminine. David Hill cautions that one should not emphasize this difference too much since in the Aramaic both words would be כיפא.[541] While this caution is valid, the fact remains that in the final form of the saying there is an obvious distinction between πέτρος and πέτρα which is hardly incidental. The distinction is not only a question of gender but of meaning. While πέτρος is a rare form and means "stone", πέτρα signifies a "rock" or "boulder".[542] Second, if Matthew intended readers to identify the rock as Peter, then we have some puzzling changes in the way Peter is addressed. Five times Jesus

[538] See below.
[539] Eg. Is. 8:14; 17:10; 26:4; 30:29; 44:8.
[540] Barrett, 87-8.
[541] Hill, *Matthew*, 55; Hagner, 470; Lampe, 227-45.
[542] Bauer, 654.

addresses him in the second person: "blessed are you..." "you are Peter..." "I will give you the keys..." "whatever you tie..." "whatever you untie..." In contrast, the saying concerning the rock is placed in the third person: "upon this rock...". If it applies to Peter, it would be the only time the third person is used of him in this passage.

Taking into account the above objections the association of Peter with the foundation rock of the Church cannot really be substantiated exegetically. Rather, the association of the rock with Jesus seems more plausible. A number of elements point in this direction.

A number of texts in the LXX metaphorically refer to God as a Rock. In Isaiah 17:10 God is the Rock of the strength of Israel. In 44:8 he is the Rock of the security of Israel. In Isaiah 28:16 God promises to establish Zion on a firm rock foundation.[543] More importantly, such texts were freely adopted in the early Christian milieu as references to Jesus.[544] In particular, Matthew retained a tradition from Mark (12:10) that associated Jesus with a Rock in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy (Mt. 21:42; Ps. 118:22; cf. Lk. 20:17; Is. 28:16; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6-7). This tradition may also be reflected in Matthew 7:24-27 where the person who follows Jesus is said to build his house on a rock.

The association of Jesus with the rock furthermore better explains the choice of the third person in the phrase "upon this rock". We saw above that in 16:13 instead of Mark and Luke's first person "who do men say that I am?", Matthew has phrased the question in the third person, "who do men say that the Son of Man is?" However, in 16:15 he follows Mark and Luke in phrasing the second question with the first person: "who do you say that I am". Thus while Matthew consistently uses the second person in the instances Peter is addressed by Jesus, he uses both the first and the third person when Jesus refers to himself. The selection of the third person in the rock saying therefore poses no problem; in fact, if we assume Son of Man is a messianic title,[545] then it serves an exegetical function in the following manner: in the first question Jesus presents himself in the third person as a messianic figure (Son of Man) but the people have failed to recognise this and instead regard him simply as a prophet; in the second question Jesus uses the first person "I" and thus turns attention

[543] In the Isaiah targum, this text was understood to refer to a person rather than a literal stone; to an idealised king (the Messiah?) who would rule over Jerusalem.
[544] E.g. Rom. 9:23, 33, 1 Cor. 10:3.
[545] See relevant footnote above.

to his present, plain appearance. Yet, Peter sees beyond this appearance and recognises the messianic majesty in his teacher. In this respect, the beatitude that Jesus pronounces on Peter (16:17) is fully deserved. The people have seen a Son of Man but recognise only a prophet; Peter sees a man but recognises a Messiah.

This juxtaposition becomes the defining point and chief characteristic of the ones who will compose the Church. The Church is not built on Jesus as a simple human being, but on Jesus as the anointed of God. Those who recognise in him the anointed of God have found the true foundation and become building stones, like Peter, in this spiritual temple. Hence the different words πέτρος and πέτρα reflect the relationship of the human rocks that are placed on the anointed rock, the true foundation. In this respect, "rock" becomes a further messianic title in this pericope.

The gates of Hades

The mention of the gates of Hades comes in 16:18. In order to understand this saying two questions need to be addressed. First, there are two feminine nouns in 16:18, πέτρα and ἐκκλησία. Does the pronoun αὐτῆς refer to the rock or the church? Second, is the expression "gates of Hades" a simple reference to death, or does it carry broader connotations?

Central to the first question are three words, which stand in the following sequence: the two nouns πέτρα, and ἐκκλησία, and the pronoun αὐτῆς. The proximity of the pronoun to the second noun could suggest that it is a reference to it - in other words, the gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church.[546] This, however, is not necessarily so. Jack Lewis, in a detailed article on the history of interpretation of this text has pointed out that past commentators have been uncertain about the antecedent of the pronoun.[547] Grammatically both options are plausible. For the moment, I will tentatively suggest that αὐτῆς refers to the rock (Jesus) on the grounds that Jesus the Messiah is the epicentre of this pericope, and that it can apply to the Church only in a secondary sense. I will return to this shortly.

The meaning of the phrase "gates of Hades" has also drawn conflicting interpretations. A number of commentators see it as representing the organised forces of evil. Allen, for example argued that the phrase means that the organised powers of

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[546] Fenton, 269.
[547] Lewis, 354.

evil would not prevail against the organised society representing the teachings of Jesus.[548] Davies and Allison opt to see a conflict between demonic forces and the Church in which the latter emerges triumphant.[549] Sullivan, rather suprisingly envisions the Church attacking Hades and rescuing its inhabitants.[550] The common denominator of these suggestions is the assumption that the "gates of Hades" are set against the Church.

There is, however, considerable evidence that "gates of Hades" simply refers to death. While this phrase does not appear elsewhere in the New Testament, it is fairly common in the LXX and somewhat less so in the early Jewish literature. In these it is always a reference to death.[551]

If we bring together the above considerations, then the saying becomes a reference to the death and resurrection of Jesus – the gates of Hades will not prevail against Jesus the rock; though the Messiah will die, he will not remain in the tomb but will rise a victor. The form κατισχύω translated as "prevail" adds an interesting insight. The verb is a compound word where the first element, the preposition κατά, means "against" but can also carry the idea of "keeping under".[552] The second element, ἰσχύω means to "be strong against". The two together mean "prevail" but may also convey the idea of "prevail by keeping under" thus adding credence that the saying is a reference to the resurrection of Jesus.[553] The strongest argument for this interpretation is contextual: the saying marks a turning point and from that time onwards Jesus begins to speak about his coming death and resurrection (16:21).

Conclusion

Our interpretation brings all the major elements of this pericope into a coherent picture. The messianic identity of Jesus is the main focus in all three Synoptics, but more so in Matthew, as his redactional contributions indicate. As the expected messianic figure, Jesus also becomes the rock spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures, on which a spiritual temple, the Church, will be built. Jesus will die but

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[548] Allen, 176. Cf. Rev. 6:8; 9:1-6; 20:3,7-8, 1QH 13. See also, Hommel, 124-5, who maintains that the church will eventually prove stonger than the gates of Hades.
[549] Davies and Allison, 2:632.
[550] Sullivan, 87.
[551] Robertson, 132. Cf. Is. 38:10; Ps. 9:13; 107:18; Job 38:17; compare with Wisd. 16:3; 3 Mac. 5:51.
[552] Liddell and Scott, 883, render κατα as "downwards".
[553] Fenton, 269, correctly evaluates the meaning of the "gates of Hades" in relation to resurrection, but feels they apply to the members of the church who share in the resurrection of Jesus.

not be defeated. On the contrary, his death and resurrection is the proof that the gates of Hades have failed to prevail against him, to keep him imprisoned down in Hades. His resurrection in turn is evidence that Hades will neither prevail against his followers, the little stones who, unlike the crowds, have seen beyond his humble appearance and recognised the anointed of God. Hades therefore functions here in a similar way to what we saw in the other Synoptic and New Testament usages – as a reference to death.

Chapter X

Luke 16:19-31

> [19]"There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. [20]And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, [21]who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. [22]The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; [23]and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom.
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> [24]And he called out, `Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' [25]But Abraham said, `Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. [26]And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'
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> [27]And he said, `Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, [28]for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' [29]But Abraham said, `They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' [30]And he said, `No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' [31]He said to him, `If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.'"

In the discussion so far we have seen that Hades in the gospels follows closely on the meaning of the Hebrew Sheol in the Old Testament and of Hades in the LXX and the rest of the New Testament. The use of Hades in the context of the parable[554] of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:23) is decidedly different. In this parable, without parallel in the other gospels,[555] Hades is no longer the place where the dead

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[554] The absence, of features that identify this literary unit as a parable, and the use of a proper name for the poor man (unique in the Synoptic parables), have led to speculation whether this passage constitutes a parable. The unit begins with the phrase ἄνθρωπος δέ τις... similar to the introductions to three other Lukan parables – Lk. 14:16-24, 15:11-31 and 16:1-8. Some in the early Church understood it as a parable; so the reading of codex Bezae that begins 16:19 with the secondary clause ἑταίραν παραβολήν. On the other hand, vv 19-31 contain strong similarities with a number of folktales, as will be discussed below. We may therefore call it a parable modelled on popular folktales.

[555] Bock, 1377, has called the parable one of the "most complex" of Jesus' stories.

await resurrection in silence; it has become a place of torment. It is not the destination of all people; it has become the abode of the villain while the worthy Lazarus rejoices in the presence of Abraham. Judgement is no longer something anticipated; it is already set in motion for both individuals. Furthermore, location plays an important role. The rich man is somewhere below while Lazarus is high, possibly in heaven and in the vicinity of an abundant flow of water. A great chasm separates the two. Such descriptions are conspicuously absent from both the Old Testament texts on Sheol and all other New Testament texts that envision a hereafter.[556] This has led Howard Marshall to suggest that here we may discern extra-biblical influence.[557]

This departure of Luke 16:19-31 from the other gospel depictions of Hades calls for a closer examination of its function in Luke's narrative. The parable has two functions. First, it concludes a prolonged conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees that spans several chapters. As such, it is the most solemn warning to the Pharisees in anticipation of a coming catastrophe. Second, it deals with questions concerning afterlife. The parable of the Unfaithful Steward (Lk. 16:1-13) has already briefly introduced the concept that actions in this life affect a person's standing in the life to come. Now the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is set almost exclusively in the hereafter. The parable's interest in the afterlife is further evidenced by close parallels with a number of folktales from a variety of backgrounds. Of most interest to this study is this second function but I will also be looking at the first as this will help verify the validity of the observations on the afterlife.

This chapter will, accordingly, be divided into four sections. First, we will offer some introductory comments concerning the unity and authenticity of the parable. Second, we examine briefly Luke's context of the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus as it reaches a climax in chapter 16. Third, we discuss the extra-biblical parallels and their possible significance for this parable. Finally, in the fourth and main part we analyse exegetically how the parable relates to (a) the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees and (b) issues of the afterlife, drawing conclusions concerning its contribution to the picture of Hades in the gospels.

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[556] See comments in Powell, 350-51; Rimmer, 215-6.
[557] Marshall, *Luke*, 637.

Unity and Authenticity

The parable falls into two parts. In the first (16:19-27), the reversal of fortunes of the rich man and Lazarus is described; poor Lazarus is in the company of Abraham, while the rich man suffers in Hades. In the second part (16:27-31), the rich man's request that Lazarus be sent to warn his brothers is refused. The emphasis is that if the rich man's brothers will not believe in the Scriptures, they will not believe even if they see the return of a person from the dead.[558]

Bultmann questioned the authenticity of the parable; he also was of the opinion that it did not circulate as a unit.[559] The reasoning behind his claim is the belief that behind this story lies either an Egyptian folk tale of reversal at death or similar stories from the ancient East that correspond to the first part but not the second or vice-versa. Most commentators, while admitting extra-biblical influence on the parable, disagree with Bultmann on the question of unity.[560]

The close relation to extra-biblical sources does not necessarily undermine its claim to unity and authenticity. It would be difficult to see the first part as Luke's contribution and the second as authentic for the simple reason that the second part presupposes the first. It is the reversal of the fortune of the rich man that prompts him to request from Abraham that Lazarus be sent back to warn his brothers.

It is also unlikely that the second part is editorial. It was noted above that the foregoing context is a prolonged conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. This conflict spans several chapters and in chapter 16 revolves around the use and misuse of money. In this respect, the first part of the parable is the one that is tied most closely to the context as it depicts a rich man (like many Pharisees) who, however, finds himself cast away from the presence of Abraham. While reasons for this are not clearly stated, they are related to his use of wealth. In contrast, the second part of the parable moves away from this theme. Instead, it emphasizes that the ground for true repentance is not the marvellous but rather "Moses and the prophets". It is therefore unlikely that Luke would have edited the parable in order to move away from the context in which he has placed it.

Additionally, as R. Hock has pointed out, it is unlikely that the two parts of the parable represent separate traditions since the second part begins in the middle of the

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[558] Ellis, *Luke*, 202.
[559] Bultmann, 178, 198.
[560] See, Fitzmyer, 1127; Ellis, *Luke*, 202. Nolland, 826, considers the parable to be one unit, but maintains the last two verses were added after the resurrection of Jesus.

dialogue between Abraham and the rich man.[561] If indeed two separate traditions underlie the passage the demarcation between them would have been clearer.

It is therefore probable that Luke inherited the parable from his source in its present form. Does it go back to Jesus? A linguistic element may hint at its authenticity. Jeremias has noted[562] that of the ninety examples of the historic present in Mark's primarily narrative material Luke has retained only one.[563] Yet, in this parable alone, Luke twice uses the historic present.[564] Jeremias concludes from this that the parable was taken from pre-Lukan material, which is probably correct. It also suggests that Luke must have had strong convictions about the dominical origin of this parable and therefore felt less at liberty to improve the syntax than he did in the case of Mark's narrative language.[565]

Again, both Jeremias[566] and W. Michaelis[567] have pointed out that in all the double-edged parables (like this one), the second point is the one most emphasised. In this case more important would not so much be the statement about the reversal of fortunes of the rich man and Lazarus, but the Scriptures as the basis of any true repentance. Since the parable begins to move away from Luke's context, it is likely that Luke preserved it in its present form because of a strong conviction concerning its authenticity. I am therefore satisfied with Fitzmyer's double conclusion that (a) the parable possesses a certain unity that transcends its possible sources, and (b) that it came from the lips of Jesus, who nonetheless, might have been utilizing existing material.[568]

The Lukan Context

The parable appears in the context of controversy between Jesus and the Pharisees. This controversy begins as early as 11:37 and colours the text of Luke until the parable in question. In 11:37-44 the conflict revolves around the importance

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[561] Hock, 454.
[562] Jeremias, *Parables*, 182.
[563] Lk. 8:49, ἔρχεται.
[564] In 16:23 ὁρᾷ, and 16:29, λέγει.
[565] Interestingly, Luke uses the historic present four further times: 13:8 and 16:7 in parables unique to Luke; 19:22 (a Q parable where Luke probably has the more authentic wording and retains the historic present in contrast to Matthew); and 7:40 (an introduction to a parable unique to Luke).
[566] Jeremias, *Parables*, 38, 186. Jeremias identified four double-edged parables: Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11-31), Rich Man and Lazarus, Labourers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16), and King's Banquet in its Matthean form (Mt. 22:1-14).
[567] Michaelis, 264.
[568] Fitzmyer, 1127.

of Pharisaic traditions,[569] which brings a sharp response from Jesus in the form of three woes denouncing their hypocrisy.[570] This exchange reaches a climax in 11:53-12:1 where the Pharisees, offended by Jesus' criticism, lay a verbal siege around him hoping to elicit a response that will condemn him.[571]

Chapter 14 follows closely on the previous conflict scenes. Jesus is invited to a meal in the house of a Pharisee. The reason for the invitation is not stated, but Jesus is kept under surveillance[572] possibly in order that they might find an excuse to accuse him. A conflict develops over whether it is lawful to heal a sick man on the Sabbath. Due to the social setting of the encounter the conflict is more subdued, but Jesus takes the opportunity of the healing to speak about humility (14:7-11), true hospitality (12-14) and the possibility that social outcasts may find themselves in the kingdom of God to the exclusion of those originally invited (16-23). It is noteworthy that all three parts of Jesus' exposition are given a hypothetical meal setting, possibly because the discussion is taking place around a table. This is worth keeping in mind in view of the lack of table fellowship in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.[573]

It is also worth noting that Jesus appears to condemn indirectly habits prevalent among Pharisees.[574] Thus, in his exposition on humility he suggests that when invited to a meal, a guest should not seek a place of honour, as presumably the Pharisees did, lest a more honourable person will cause the host to ask the first guest to move to a less honourable place. In the exposition on true hospitality, Jesus instructs that when inviting people for a meal, care should be taken that invitations be given to persons of true need, rather than to those of important social standing. Again it seems that this passage exposes a practise among Pharisees to socialize in a closed

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[569] Gooding, 230-37.

[570] With few exceptions, the gospels portray the Pharisees in a negative light. They are hypocritical and delight in establishing stringent rules of interpretation on the Law while themselves evading its requirements (Mk. 7:5-13); they are lovers of money (Lk. 16:14); they are proud of their spiritual status and despise the simple folk (Lk. 18:11); they are against Jesus and scheme for his destruction (John 11:46-50). That such a picture was an accurate representation was accepted until the beginning of the last century. Since then a number of apologies have been written on their behalf (Herford, *The Pharisees*; Neusner, *The Pharisees*; cf. Carroll, 603-21; Klijn, "Scribes", 259-67). Whatever approach one takes to the spirituality of the Pharisees, the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is deeply embedded within its Lukan context of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees in which the latter are clearly pictured in the negative. As such, the pertinent question in understanding this parable is not who and what the Pharisees really were, but how Luke portrays them.

[571] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 510, translates δεινῶς ἐνέχειν as "to be exceedingly hostile".

[572] ἦσαν παρατηρούμενοι αὐτόν.

[573] On the parable and the poor, see Karlbein, 80-87.

[574] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 570-571.

circle to the exclusion of persons of lower social standing. This again may cast its shadow on the relations between the two protagonists in our parable.

The suggestion that Luke is condemning the social and spiritual exclusiveness of the Pharisees is verified by 15:2 where, in contrast to the message of Jesus in the previous chapter which the Pharisees have failed to understand, they complain of him: "This man receives sinners and eats with them."[575] It is likely therefore, that the meal scenes of Luke 14-15 cast their image on the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus where lack of table fellowship figures prominently.

The more immediate context is chapter 16. The chapter is composed of two parables and a short exposition by Jesus after the first parable. The first parable (the Unfaithful Steward), deals primarily with the right and wrong use of money, and so does Jesus' exposition.[576] The unfaithful steward, though of doubtful moral quality, nonetheless had the foresight to use the money entrusted to him to secure for himself a refuge once he lost his job. While the parable is addressed to the disciples (16:1), it was apparently intended for the ears of the Pharisees since they were the ones who were lovers of money and of substantial means (16:14). In the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, money is also important.

Money thus becomes an issue of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. Through the parable and the exposition that follows, Jesus attempts to warn against excessive love of money and encourage wise stewardship. The Pharisees apparently were not convinced and rejected the principles Jesus presented. Luke is very clear on the reason behind the disagreement: in a statement unique to him, he describes the Pharisees as "lovers of money"[577] (16:14). The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus therefore seems to be a direct answer to the scoffing of the Pharisees. Thus, while the first parable was addressed primarily to the disciples (16:1), Jesus now turns to the Pharisees (16:15).

Between the parable of the Unfaithful Steward and the Rich Man and Lazarus comes the exposition of 16:15-18 that deals with the perpetuity of the law followed by an example of how the commandment against adultery finds application in relation to

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[575] Gooding, 269-270.
[576] Ellis, *Luke*, 198.
[577] Greek, φιλάργυροι only in 2 Tim. 3:2 and 4 Macc. 2:8. The rich and privileged class in Palestine among the Jews were the Sadducees rather than the Pharisees. Nonetheless, several Synoptic texts depict the Pharisees as having an undue regard for things material. See e.g., Mt. 16:5; 23:16-7,18-19; Mk. 7:11; Lk. 13:31; 14:5-6,7-11,12; 16:14.

marriage and divorce.[578] This departure from the theme of money is not out of place; on the contrary, as Fitzmyer points out, the brief discussion on the law's perpetuity and nature links with the assertion of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus that "Moses and the prophets" are the most reliable and effective witness in questions of faith and greater than even a supposed witness account from somebody who was dead and has come back to life.[579]

We may conclude therefore that the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is built on the previous conflicts between Jesus and the Pharisees as presented by Luke and gathers together the issues of the social exclusiveness of the Pharisees and their love for money.

The Non-Biblical Background

The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus does not only operate as a climax in the development of a prolonged conflict; it is also a story that displays a strong interest in the afterlife. A number of ancient tales from a variety of sources dealing with the afterlife contain close parallels to our parable. The question therefore has been asked about the relationship between the two. Did Jesus use material that was popular in the milieu in which he ministered? If so, how close is the parallel between the parable and such material? These questions have generated considerable discussion and I will proceed to discuss briefly and evaluate the main suggestions that have been proposed.

Stories of Reversal of Fortune in the Afterlife – the Search for an Immediate Source

The most influential suggestion was put forth in 1918 by H. Gressmann[580] who maintained the parable derived from an Egyptian folktale of reversal at death. The folktale comes from a papyrus dated to the middle of the first century AD but is probably much earlier.[581] According to the folktale an Egyptian magician, Si-osiris, returns from Amente, the land of the dead, in order to defeat an Ethiopian magician.

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[578] See Cave, 319-25 on Lukan Deuteronomic applications.

[579] Fitzmyer, 1128. In this respect it is worth comparing Luke's contrast between the witness of "Moses and the Prophets" against that of a person with insight into the afterlife with Paul's assertion that the witness of the gospel (what he preached and wrote based on "Moses and the prophets") is to be preferred over and against a contrary witness even if it comes from an angel (Gal. 1:8).

[580] Gressmann, *Vom reichen Mann.*

[581] Fitzmyer, 1126, gives a date of AD 47 but Bauckham, "Parallels," 225, notes that the story is set as early as the 13th century BC. The folktale is found in translation in Griffith, 42-43.

He is reincarnated into the poor family of Setme Khamuas. At the age of twelve he vanquishes the Ethiopian and returns to Amente. The point of interest is not Si-osiris' magical capacities but a rather unrelated incident. At some point, Si-osiris and his father come across two funerals – one of a rich man, complete with splendid honours, the other of a poor one who is cast into a common necropolis in Memphis. When Setme sees the great honour bestowed on the rich dead, he cries out wishing to have a similar fate. The young Si-osiris, however, knows otherwise. He therefore takes his father on a tour of Amente where they see the rich man in torment that is vividly described, while the poor man stands by the side of Osiris, the judge of humankind. Bauckham has correctly noted that the incident at the funeral and the subsequent tour is not tied to the rest of the story about the reincarnation of Si-osiris and therefore could well have circulated as an independent unit.[582]

Gressmann maintained that the story was brought to Palestine where it enjoyed considerable popularity and cited as evidence a number of rabbinic stories, which he considered to be versions of the folktale. The earliest of these is the Bar Mayan tale.[583] Bar Mayan, supposedly a rich tax farmer in Ashkelon, died and was given a splendid funeral. At the same time, a poor scholar died but nobody noticed his death and burial. The different fortunes at death of the persons led an onlooker to question the justice of God. In reply, God reveals that the fate of the two at death was directly related to their life. Bar Mayan had done one good deed in his life, which was rewarded in his splendid funeral. In contrast, the poor scholar had done one bad deed in his life, which was atoned for through his poor burial; he could now stand pure in the day of judgement.

The Egyptian folktale and the Bar Mayan legend could provide a background for the first part of the parable – the reversal of the fortunes of the two central figures. Rudolf Bultmann took a different approach and suggested another Jewish fable as a possible source for the second part of the parable – the possibility of a return from Hades as a means to repentance.[584] A godless rich couple live in a house that has a door leading to hell. Though they have been warned not to tamper with it, curiosity leads the wife to open the door. She is immediately taken to hell. While there she suffers graphically described torments. A young boy visit hell, where she warns him

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[582] Bauckham, "Parallels," 226.
[583] *j.Hag.* 2.77.
[584] Bultmann, 197; Bin Gorion, 76-81.

of her fate and requests that he inform her husband of her sufferings so that he might repent and avoid a similar fate. The husband indeed repents and the story probably functions as a warning to the readers to repent and avoid a sad fate.

More recently, Ronald Hock has argued in favour of a Hellenistic background for both parts of the parable.[585] Lucian's (c. AD 120-180) *Cataplus* contains a story of reversal of fortune and his *Gallus* provides additional insights into the account. According to Lucian, three men die and are taken to Hades – the rich tyrant Megapenthes, the poor shoemaker Mycilus, and a Cynic philosopher. When they arrive at the throne of Radamanthys, the judge of the world, the philosopher and Mycilus, found to be spotless, are sent to the blessed isles, while Megapenthes, found guilty of gross misconduct, is punished accordingly. Through this tale, Lucian presents his belief in the corrupting power of wealth. Megapenthes was not only a tyrant but a very immoral one as such, and his immorality was directly related to his wealth. By contrast, the poor Mycilus had to work so hard for a living that he simply did not have opportunities to become immoral. The point of the tale is therefore that wealth corrupts while poverty builds an upright character.

Finally, Larry Kreitzer[586] has suggested that behind the parable in Luke lies the influence of BW 1 Enoch 22.[587] The points of contact are not in the development of the parable, but rather in its geography. Kreitzer sees a parallel between the four chambers of the souls in BW 1 Enoch and the separation between the rich man and Lazarus; the deep and dark void (BW 1 En. 22:1-2) and the great chasm in the parable between Hades and Abraham's bosom (16:26);[588] the spring of water in BW 1 Enoch (22:9) and the water in the vicinity of Abraham and Lazarus in the parable (16:24); and the final judgement in BW 1 Enoch (22:9-10) with the suffering of the rich man (16:23, 25).

Kreitzer's approach offers an interesting insight but cannot really address the source-critical question, since the important elements in the parable consist not so much in geography as in the developments of the fate of the characters. However, even in the area of geography, the contrasts between BW 1 Enoch and the parable are stronger than the similarities. In the parable, the rich man and Lazarus appear in bodily form even after their death (Lk 16:23, 24), while in Enoch the chambers are for

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[585] Hock, 55.
[586] Kreitzer, 139-42.
[587] Cf. Standen, 523.
[588] Cf. de Bruyne, 400-405.

disembodied souls; in the parable some kind of judgement has already taken place, hence the punishment and bliss respectively (16:22,24), while in Enoch it is anticipated; in the parable Hades has become a place of suffering (16:24), in Enoch it is a place of waiting; in the parable the great chasm serves to divide Lazarus from the rich man (16:26), while in Enoch the deep dark *is* Hades.[589] The similarities therefore between the two are superficial and in no way are determinative in understanding either the purpose of the parable or the function of Hades within it.

Concerning the possible sources outlined above, there are definite points of contact. But there are also important differences. The closest to the parable seems to be the Egyptian fable. Yet there are distinct differences. In the fable, it is the difference in the burial of the two that is reversed at death; in the parable, the contrast is between life and the afterlife. In the fable the revelation about the afterlife is given through a tour of Amente; there is no tour in the parable.[590] The fable's concept of reincarnation is completely absent from the parable.

Something similar may be said of the Bar Mayan legend. The legend suggests that the wicked gain a reward on earth for whatever good they may have done so that on the day of judgement they are fully liable for punishment. Likewise the righteous suffer here for the few sins they have committed so that they may receive a clear record on the day of judgement. Such casuistry is missing from the parable.

Bultmann's suggestion about the godless couple fails to parallel the first part of the parable and can illuminate it only insofar that a revelation about the afterlife serves to bring repentance. But even here there are discrepancies. In the legend, there is a tour of hell for living persons who return to tell what they have seen; in the parable, a return from the dead is requested, but refused. In the legend, the revelation about afterlife brings repentance; in the parable, it is emphatically stated that such a revelation, even if granted, would not bring repentance.

Finally, Hock's attempt to see a relation between the parable and Lucian's characters also fails to provide an adequate source. For Lucian the Cynic, there is something inherently evil in wealth, which is bound to lead to immorality of various sorts. Poverty on the other hand, leads to integrity since the poor person is too busy to fall into sin. In the parable, such a direct link between wealth and immorality and poverty and integrity is lacking.

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[589] In the Greek text. The relevant Aramaic is missing.
[590] For a discussion of the differences, see Bauckham, "Parallels", 228.

Accounts of Revelations of the Afterlife – Establishing a Broader Background

The attempts discussed above fail to provide an *immediate* source from which Jesus could have drawn the material for his parable. Indeed, it seems that any such attempts are bound to end in failure for the simple reason that there was not necessarily one *immediate* source from which Jesus drew. As Hock has observed, the motif of a reversal of fortunes for rich and poor after death belonged to the common culture of the whole Mediterranean world.[591]

In a recent article already cited, Bauckham has broadened the scope of the discussion. He maintains that in order to best understand the parable in relation to its non-biblical context we need not look for one *immediate* source that may not even have existed, but rather to realise that in ancient cultures tales of revelations from the dead were fairly common. Bauckham cites a number of examples the more important of which I will discuss.

The first comes from Plato's story of Er the Pamphylian.[592] Er was killed in battle but revived several days later as he was about to be burned. During the interval, while "dead" he visited Hades in disembodied form. He saw a judgement scene at which the good were sent to heaven and the wicked were punished. During his visit, he was specifically told to return to the land of the living and report what he had seen. Bauckham suggests that Plato's account influenced similar tales told by Plutarch about Thespesius or by Clearchus of Soli about Cleonymus.[593] The latter tale has an interesting twist. While in Hades Cleonymus meets another temporary visitor. They agree that once they return to the land of the living they will maintain contact with each other.

Lucian tells another tale of return about a man named Cleomenes. According to Lucian, Cleomenes fell ill and his psychopomp came to take him to Hades, though his time had not yet come. On arriving in Hades, Pluto informed him that a man named Demylus, a neighbour of Cleomenes, should have been brought instead. Cleomenes was therefore sent back to the land of the living and indeed, within a few days, his neighbour Demylus passed away.

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[591] Hock, 455-63.
[592] Plato, *Resp.* 10.614B-621B.
[593] Bauckham, "Parallels," 238.

Such tales, though from a pagan background, quickly found their way into Jewish and Christian tradition. In the Babylonian Talmud[594] there is an apocryphal story of Samuel the prophet to whom some orphans had entrusted a substantial amount of money, which he, in turn, deposited, with his own savings, with his father Abba. Abba hid the money in a safe place but died when Samuel was absent. As Samuel was not aware where his father had kept the money and was under obligation to return the money to the orphans, he set for Sheol to find Abba. There an interesting encounter takes place with a number of well known, deceased rabbis; the encounter aims to encourage readers to be faithful in their attendance at the yeshiva. Eventually Abba tells Samuel where the money is kept and everything is restored to its owners thanks to this revelation from the dead.

A Christian example would be the account of Jannes and Jambres, the two Egyptian magician brothers who in Jewish tradition opposed Moses in the court of Pharaoh.[595] Jannes dies for his opposition to Moses. Jambres calls his spirit up from hell through necromancy and Jannes informs him of his sufferings and of the justice of his fate for opposing God's work. He urges Jambres to repent to avoid a similar fate, but as the extant text is extremely fragmented we do not know whether Jambres heeded his brother's warning.

So far we have seen that the parable does not necessarily draw from one source but rather from a genre of similar stories that were popular in cultures of the Mediterranean world concerning revelations from the dead. The closest parallels are without doubt to be found in the stories of reversal of fortune between rich and poor like the Si-osiris, Bar Mayan and Megapenthes tales. Nonetheless, tales of more general revelations from the dead, like those of Er the Pamphylian and Samuel the prophet, provide a broader context and put into perspective the rich man's request that Lazarus be sent from the dead with a message for his five living brothers.[596] In light of such tales, this request does not seem out of place.

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[594] *b. Berak.* 18b.

[595] Genesis neither numbers nor names the magicians who opposed Moses, nor does it state they were brothers. Jewish tradition named them as Jannes and Jambres, a tradtion known in 2 Tim. 3:8; cf. CD 5.17b-19. See McNamara, 82-96.

[596] For a broader discussion of trips to and from the land of the dead see Bauckham, *Fate*, 9-48, 81-96. Though Bauckham cites examples from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, more examples survive from Greek and Roman sources, which, he argues, stimulated the growth of similar traditions in Jewish and Christian circles, particularly in apocalyptic writings.

Before closing this discussion of the non-biblical parallels, I would like to point out three elements that connect all the relevant non-biblical tales into a coherent pattern. First, revelations from the dead were always told with a purpose of bringing some improvement to the life of the living. Thus, in the tales of Si-osiris and of the poor Ashkelon scholar, the revelation from the dead brings contentment to a poor father and reassurance of God's justice respectively. In the tales of the godless couple or in Lucian's accounts of Megapenthes, or of Jannes and Jambres, the aim is to bring complete reformation of life to the arrogant and immoral rich. The intended effect is moral improvement.

Second, a message from the dead can come in a variety of ways but not through resurrection. Sometimes it comes through a visit of the living to the dead – whether in bodily form, as in the case of Samuel, the rich godless couple, or as disembodied spirits, as in the case of Er from Pamphylia and Lucian's Cleomenes. At other times the dead appear as ghosts, or in visions. The dead can appear on their own initiative, or be called up through necromancy as in the case of Jannes and Jambres. Bodily resurrection is never involved. The reason behind the absence of resurrection is that such tales developed primarily in pagan cultures where the idea of a bodily resurrection was absent.

Third, revelations from the dead always include an eyewitness account. In most cases the eyewitness is named, and usually, is a well known personality. Often there are two witnesses. The presence of named and often famous eyewitnesses served to lend credibility to such tales that would otherwise have been hard to believe. The habit of naming an eyewitness testifies to a relationship between such revelations from the dead and the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, as this is the only extant parable in which one of the characters is named.[597]

Conclusions on the Non-Biblical Context

Bringing the discussion of the extra-biblical background together, we may say that there was (a) a specific genre of accounts of reversal of fortune at death that closely parallels certain elements in the first part of the parable of the Rich Man and

[597] Tanghe, 557-77, considers Lazarus to be Abraham's envoy, since Lazarus is the Greek version of the Hebrew Eleazar, Abraham's servant (Gen. 15:2; cf. 24:2). The parable does not make such a connection. However, in light of its relation to stories about the afterlife where a known eyewitness usually has a prominent role, it is not implausible that such a connection between Lazarus and Eleazar could be made in the minds of the audience.

Lazarus, and (b) a broader interest among the Mediterranean cultures in the afterlife, which gave rise to tales about persons returning from the dead that assist in understanding the second part of the parable.

The number of such accounts leaves no doubt that they were popular.[598] Bauckham notes that elements like cases of mistaken identities, or the agreement between Cleonymus and the fellow temporary visitor to Hades to become friends once they return to life, or the repeated reference to same sights in Hades lends them a certain folkloric quality. While respected authors like Plato used such tales as vehicles of expression, they probably mostly circulated among the common people. We can therefore safely conclude that when the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is told the audience is probably familiar with accounts of a reversal of fortune after death, or of revelations from the dead, which circulated widely, crossing linguistic or cultural barriers.

A pertinent question is whether such fables or accounts were believed to represent the actual state of affairs in the realm of the dead. The answer to such a question would be both yes and no. The tale concerning Er the Pamphylian seems to have been used by Plato in order to convey his understanding of the afterlife, though that does not necessarily suggest that Plato really believed in the veracity of the account itself. There is little doubt that at least among those who believed in a conscious existence after death - especially among the less educated and more superstitious - such tales could plausibly have been considered true. At the same time, the folk nature of many such tales would undermine any claim to credibility, at least among the more educated, less superstitious, and perhaps the rich who were often the ones villified.

Exegetical analysis on the parable

So far, we have seen that there existed a rich pool of legends and fables about post mortem reversals of fortune or returns from the dead that provide a background to the parable. I have already suggested that the parable functions on two levels – as a polemic against the Pharisees and as a commentary on popular versions of the afterlife. With these in mind, we can proceed to examine the first part of the parable.

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[598] See for example, Collison-Morley, *Stories*. J. Green, 609, points that stories of the dead visiting the living, were very common.

The Parable's First Part – Content and Function

The first part of the parable begins as a typical tale of reversal of fortune – a rich and a poor man who die and discover that their fortunes have been reversed. Despite this conventional beginning, however, there are a number of peculiarities in the first few verses that seem inappropriate for such a tale.

The first such peculiarity is found in the depiction of Lazarus before he died. In 16:21 he desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table.[599] C. F. Evans has suggested that the idea here is Lazarus was feeding not on what fell from the table, but rather from the leftover foods that were thrown out, either for the dogs or for poor people. This he supports by referring to the fact that Lazarus was at the gate of the rich man's house rather than at the foot of his table.[600] However, this is unlikely. The phrase ἀπό τῶν πιπτόντων implies that which falls down rather than what is thrown out. Maybe Lazarus was hoping to feed himself on the crumbs that fell from the table and were then swept out into the street. Either way, that which fell from the rich man's table or was thrown out could hardly be expected to feed a hungry man.[601] This is hinted in the text by the use of the verb ἐπιθυμέω which suggests an unfulfilled desire and could therefore better be translated as "longed".[602]

Furthermore, the word χορτασθῆναι of 16:21, translated "fed", conveys the meaning of "being filled" or "satisfied".[603] It would be difficult enough to suggest that Lazarus could subsist on the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, let alone to be filled and satisfied. Two well attested, but probably secondary readings, enhance the lack of realism of this depiction. Some manuscripts[604] add the phrase

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[599] Derrett, 372, suggests that Lazarus possibly expected to be admitted into the table fellowship of the rich man on the grounds that he was a Jew, and thus a "brother" to the rich man. Derrett sees in Lazarus, Abraham's servant Eliezer, since the former is merely a variation of the name Eliezer. According to him, Abraham who is alive in heaven sends his servant Eliezer in the guise of Lazarus to see whether his descendants maintain the norms of hospitality and fellowship – but is no doubt disappointed. Derrett probably reads too much into the parable. True, in light of the context of the parable, there is a definite though indirect blame on the rich man for failing to extend any mercy to Lazarus. Whether Lazarus would have expected to be admitted to the rich man's house, on the other hand, is altogether doubtful. Derrett's suggestion would have been more plausible if, once in the bosom of Abraham, Lazarus' supposedly true identity as Abraham's servant had somehow been revealed. But no such thing happens. Lazarus finds himself in the company of Abraham not because of any previous acquaintance, nor because that was his original habitation from which he was sent on his mission to earth, but simply because in his lifetime he received "evil things" (16:25).

[600] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 613.

[601] Gooding, 276.

[602] Bauer, 293. Bock, 1367, translates ἐπιθυμέω as "a strong desire" often involving food.

[603] Bauer, 883,884.

[604] $\aleph^2$; A; D; W; θ; ψ; sy; su.

"tiny crumbs",[605] implying that what fell from the table could not really feed Lazarus. This addition is probably a reflection of Matthew 15:27 where the Syro-Pheonician woman compared herself to a dog that would feed on the crumbs that fell from the table. Another variant reading "and nobody gave to him [from the crumbs]"[606] likewise reflects the language of Luke 15:16 of the prodigal son who was longing to fill himself with the food, normally given to the dogs, which nobody would give him.

Therefore, in 16:21 we have a hyperbole.[607] In the ancient Near East poverty and famine were not unknown, especially in a province like Judea. Some of those to whom the parable was addressed would have probably gone hungry at some time or another. This description of the dietary habits of Lazarus is a parody on the behaviour of the rich man; Lazarus longed for the crumbs because there was nothing more for him to find. The rich man, who must have been aware of Lazarus' presence, foolishly considered Lazarus' diet to be adequate; he seems to be completely blind to his plight.[608]

A second peculiarity comes in the use of the phrase "the bosom of Abraham" to which Lazarus is carried by an angel.[609] The phrase is unknown among earlier Jewish writings. It does appear in later midrashim but Fitzmyer suggests it has been taken over from here.[610] The exact meaning of the phrase therefore eludes us.[611] Nonetheless, certain gospel parallels may shed some light. According to John 1:18, the Son was in the bosom of the Father. The idea here is of close association or intimacy, which may also be the picture in the parable.[612] Alternatively, the gospels picture an eschatological gathering where the saved are welcomed to a banquet by

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[605] τῶν ψιχίων.

[606] f^{13}; pc; vg^{cl}.

[607] J. Green, 605, calls the difference in lifestyle between the two characters, an "extravagant parallelism".

[608] It is worth noting that while modern sensitivities might find the rich man guilty of not having cared for the predicament of poor Lazarus, Abraham explains his sad fate in Hades not in terms of anything wrong he might have done, but simply because he enjoyed riches in his lifetime (LK. 16:25). Strauss, 351, explained this in light of other Synoptic beautitudes to the poor and warnings to the rich (Mt. 19:16-30; Mk. 10:17-31; Lk. 18:18-30; especially Lk. 6:20-21). The fate of the rich man goes well beyond the warning of Jesus concerning the rich and his sufferings in Hades are best understood in relation to the parable's overall purpose, rather than as an expression of what awaits rich individuals.

[609] Angelic escorts are common in early Jewish literature. See Bock, 1368 (he cites T. Job 47:11; 52:2,5; T.Abr. (A) 20:11-12; T. Asher 6:4-6).

[610] Fitzmyer, 1132.

[611] Nolland, 829, suggests it is a euphemism for "dead" and cites *b. Quidd.* 72a. However, the lively exchange the rich man and Abraham, which assumes Lazarus is a fully functioning and conscous individual, undermines Nolland's association of the bossom of Abraham with death.

[612] Cf. the comments of J. Green, 607.

Abraham.[613] In such a case, the bosom of Abraham would be an idiomatic reference to heaven.[614] The motif is powerful since Lazarus, who was on a par with the unclean dogs, finds himself in the presence of Abraham, father of the Jews, while the rich man (Pharisee?)[615] who considered himself the child of Abraham *par excellence* finds himself excluded. Whatever the idea behind the reference to the bosom of Abraham, it clearly should be understood as figurative language for heaven. It is indeed used figuratively in 16:22 where Lazarus is carried by the angels to "the bosom of Abraham".

Yet, in 16:23 the parable switches from the figurative to the literal. The rich man in Hades raises his eyes and sees Abraham far off and Lazarus seated in his bosom.[616] It is hardly likely that the parable conveys the idea that Lazarus was *literally* in the bosom of Abraham, yet this is what 16:23 implies.

In 16:24 there is a third peculiarity. When the rich man sees Abraham in the distance he "calls out" to him. It was already noted in the discussion of non-biblical material that one of the characteristics of stories of reversal of fortune at death, and of other revelations from the afterlife was the graphic depiction of suffering. The parable avoids such detailed descriptions, but it does depict the rich man as suffering in flames. Given that the greater the torment after death in such stories the greater the possibility the revelation would encourage its hearers to repent, it is noteworthy that the rich man here "calls out" to Abraham rather than "cries out" as he would have been expected to have done if in great agony. The word φωνήσας suggests that the rich man raised his voice just enough to be heard by Abraham in the distance. Such a construction is incompatible with a person being in extreme agony for whom a derivative of κράζω would have been more appropriate, possibly accompanied by an explanative phrase – e.g. with a loud voice.[617] The use of φωνήσας is not in line

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[613] Eg. 4 Macc. 13:17; *b. Kid.* 72b.

[614] See C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 613. In contrast, J. Green, 607, places the "bossom of Abraham" in Hades. Bock, 1369, also accepts the idea that it is "below" rather than "above", yet he associates "Abraham's bossom" with paradise, which, therefore, must also be part of Hades!

[615] Gooding, 276, sees a Pharisee rather than a Sadducee on the basis that Sadducees did not believe in an afterlife.

[616] ἐν τοῖς κόλποις αὐτοῦ.

[617] Bauer, 447,870 translates both φωνέω and κράζω as to "call," or "cry out". Yet, there is a decided difference between the two; the latter is a much more intense expression. This is evident in the way Luke uses both words. He uses φωνέω on several occasions when a person raises his voice to be heard (8:8,54) or simply as the equivalent of "calling somebody" (14:12; 16:2). Twice he uses the verb with the explanatory phrase φωνῇ μεγάλῃ; first of Jesus when he cried out before he died (23:46) and then of Paul when he raised his voice to be heard by the guard ready to kill himself in Philippi (Acts

with the supposed intensity of the suffering; neither is, for that matter, the casual tone of the conversation between the rich man and Abraham in the first part of the parable.

Another peculiar element in 16:24-25 is the word ὀδυνῶμαι, translated "anguish" and used twice to describe the rich man's torments. It refers to mental anguish rather than physical pain[618] and is thus used elsewhere by Luke.[619] Yet, the rich man seeks to relieve his suffering through water. The parable therefore contains the following contradictory imagery: the rich man exists in bodily form in Hades in the midst of literal fire which, however, cause him mental rather than physical agony, which in turn he seeks to relieve through real water!

Still in 16:24 there is yet another problem. The rich man requests that Abraham send Lazarus to dip the "tip of his finger"[620] in water and bring it to Hades to cool his tongue. The rich man could have asked for a bucket of water. Provided there was no such thing in or around the bosom of Abraham, he might have requested that Lazarus scoop some water with his palm, or, at least, dip his hand. One wonders how much water the tip of the finger can hold; or whether, whatever the amount, it could ever reach the rich man in liquid form in a place engulfed in fire; or even if it did, how much release and for how long would such a minimal amount of water really offer to the rich man in anguish. Fitzmyer suggests that here Jesus uses a hyperbole to express the torment's severity.[621] This is hardly likely. The description sounds more absurd than scary.

This is further verified by the form of the verb "to cool" (καταψύχω). Liddell and Scott use a number of words to define it – "cool," "chill," "refresh," while

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10:18). In contrast, κράζω is used of the demons crying out when defeated by Jesus (4:41), of the evil spirit taking hold of a boy (9:39), of Paul and Barnabas crying out in disgust when the populace of Lystra considered them to be gods (Acts 14:14), or of the great cry of the crowd in Ephesus who for two hours cried out the greatness of their goddess Artemis (Acts 19:28). This more dramatic tone is further enhanced when used in conjunction with the phrase φωνῇ μεγάλη as in the case of the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:57,60). Κράζω, therefore, is more emphatic and a more appropriate description of the rich man's plight.

[618] Bauer 555. Bauer concedes the word might be used of physical pain but the only text he cites from the New Testament is the one under consideration. In the LXX it is used of such things as the anguish of the heathen cities as they stand before the Lord (Zech. 9:5), of the weeping of the people for having rejected the Lord (Zech. 12:10). Similarly, C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 612, notes that the word is used outside the Bible in poetical writers with reference to mental pain.

[619] Luke uses ὀδυνῶμαι twice more: in Lk. 12:38 of the "anguish" Joseph and Mary felt when they lost Jesus in the temple for three days, and in Acts 20:38 of the "anguish" the elders of Ephesus felt when they were told that they would not see Paul again.

[620] The Greek ἄκρον can better be translated as the "tip" of the finger. See Bauer, 34, and the comments in Marshall, *Luke*, 637.

[621] Fitzmyer, 1133.

they render the related adjective καταψυχρος as "very cold".[622] The prefixed preposition κατά makes it more emphatic. A drop of water, carried on the fingertip, over a large expanse of space through great fire, could not be expected to chill the mouth of the rich man.[623]

Beyond these peculiar elements there are a number of theological discrepancies between the depiction of Hades in the parable and what the gospels otherwise say concerning afterlife, or, for that matter, what a Jewish audience might have expected to hear. For example, in the discussion of Hades in the previous chapter, it was shown that the most common depiction of Sheol/Hades in Jewish writings envisiones a place of silence and death. The possibility of disembodied souls carrying on some kind of existence was also entertained, but even such an existence was considered shadowy. In this respect, the presence of living, corporeal persons in Hades, fully conscious and engaged in lively conversation could not fail to strike an odd note to a Jewish audience, or to the readers of Luke's gospel. A living, corporeal person would best fit a motif of an eschatological resurrection and a day of judgement, but neither is mentioned or hinted at here.

On a similar note, the fact that already the rich man is suffering and Lazarus is enjoying the blessings of heaven would suggest that the day of judgement has occured. Yet, this is clearly not the case since the rich man's five brothers are still alive. It almost seems as if this incident would indeed be post-day-of –judgement but has been moved back to Hades only to facilitate the discussion between the rich man and Abraham concerning the possibility of Lazarus returning to warn the five brothers. In light of these observations, the possibility of a coherent eschatology in the parable is dropped altogether. The purpose of the parable cannot be to reveal the afterlife in detail; instead its importance lies elsewhere.

The question that needs to be addressed is the purpose of these peculiar elements and theological discrepancies in the first part of the parable. We have noted above that the main thrust of the parable occurs in the second part. We also observed that the parable functions both as a polemic against the Pharisees and as a commentary on popular versions of the afterlife. I would therefore now like to

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[622] Liddell and Scott, 922. The verb καταψύχω appears only here in the New Testament. Luke, however, uses once more the substantive ψῦχος without the prefixed preposition in Acts 28:2 to describe the cold, rainy, winter weather Paul met after the shipwreck in Malta.

[623] Cf. North, 19-31.

propose that the unconventional first part of the parable serves two purposes: first, the parable is modelled after a genre of tales often believed as true, but is constructed with so many unrealistic or even absurd elements and theological discrepancies that it undermines the credibility of the genre; second, though the story begins as a conventional tale of reversal, the unexpected and unrealistic details add an element of surprise that aims to arrest the attention to the second part of the parable where the main message of the parable is delivered.

The Parable's Second Part – (a) a Challenge to the Pharisees

As already noted the parable appears in a context of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees mocked Jesus' call for wise stewardship (Lk. 16:14); they also derided him for mingling with the lower classes of society (Lk. 15:2). We have also noted that stories of reversal at death circulated primarily among the masses and probably functioned as a way of handling frustration at their low social standing.

In response, Jesus told the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus that closely resembles popular stories of reversal. Yet, a conventional tale of reversal would, for Luke, been ineffective. Since tales of reversal often vilified wealth and, the Pharisees, according to Luke, were interested in money (Lk. 16:14), such a tale would probably have been dismissed. Since wealth was often considered a blessing from God and poverty or disease a curse (Jn. 9:1,34), the rich were the ones considered as favoured of God (Lk. 18:25-26). Also, since all extant stories of reversal imply a moral deficiency in the lives of the rich, the Pharisees would have another reason to disregard such tales, since they considered themselves worthy expositors of the Torah (Mt. 23:3-7). If the parable had been a conventional tale of reversal, it would only have resulted in further mocking. In such a context, the unconventional development of the first part serves to arrest the attention of the audience; here is not just another tale of reversal – something is different.

In contrast to the first part, the second lacks hyperbole, absurdities or theological contradictions. The parable takes a solemn turn. The rich man has five brothers who apparently lead lives similar to the life he led. He therefore requests that Lazarus be sent to call them to repentance lest they find themselves in a similar position. Abraham's reply that they have "Moses and the prophets" ties in with the

immediate context of the parable in 16:16-18 about the immutability of the law. Apparently, the Scriptures themselves should be an adequate witness.

The solemn tone is clear from the rich man's response to Abraham's refusal to send Lazarus. So far, the rich man has surprisingly accepted his fate in Hades without complaint even though he must have considered himself a child of Abraham destined for salvation; he accepts Lazarus' now superior position without any sign of jealousy; he even accepts Abraham's reply that Lazarus cannot be sent to cool his tongue. However, in 16:30, for the first time in the conversation, the rich man refuses to accept Abraham's statement, replying with an abrupt "No". Lazarus, he explains, can indeed make a difference in the life of his brothers. He is firmly convinced that the brothers will repent. Luke uses here the verb μετανοήσουσιν without qualification. Surely, the witness of the returned Lazarus will convince them.

The sudden turn of the story would make the reader almost hope that Abraham would honour the request. But Abraham refuses a second time. It is not that Abraham does not want to send Lazarus; nor that Lazarus is not willing to go; neither, for that matter, is such a request impossible to fulfil. Rather, such a move would be ineffective. If the brothers will not accept the testimony of Moses and the prophets then neither will Lazarus' return convince them.

The parable ends abruptly without comment either by Jesus or Luke. It also ends on a desperate note. The rich man, apparently more worried about his brothers' fate than his own, becomes quiet knowing that there is nothing more he can do for them. Abraham, who had been addressing the rich man from the position of a father figure ends the discussion explaining that even he cannot do anything for the five.

As Fitzmyer points out, it is the five brothers who become the focus of attention.[624] As Abraham, Lazarus and the rich man fade away, the five brothers continue their self-satisfied existence just like the rich man did while alive. Yet all the while, they are faced with a crisis and do not realise it. Their fortune will suddenly be overturned; they will not know this until it happens. The true parallel, therefore, to the Pharisees is not the rich man but his five brothers. They are the ones who feel self-righteous, rich and satisfied. But disaster will come upon them unannounced.

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[624] Fitzmyer, 1126.

Moses and the law play a significant role in the unfolding of the parable. The Pharisees claimed to be the expositors of the scriptures (Mt. 3-7). Yet, Luke repeatedly claims that the Scriptures testify of Jesus (e.g. Lk. 2:32; 24:27). He hints this in the introduction to the parable in 16:16: "The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and every one enters it violently." In this respect, the Pharisees should have been the first to accept him, being the ones most acquainted with the Scriptures. But now that they have rejected the witness of the Scriptures, nothing else will convince. Disaster awaits them and they do not realise it.

With the end of the parable comes a turning point in Luke's narrative. In chapter 17 the gospel moves away from the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees are mentoned three more times in Luke's gospel. In 17:20 they ask a question about the kingdom of God. However, the context is not a conflict setting and the question simply functions as an introduction to a discourse about the coming kingdom of God. Then in 18:9-14, in reply to an unnamed group of Jews, Jesus tells the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector who went to the temple to pray. The group whose religious arrogance Jesus castigated resembles in their attitude the characteristics elsewhere ascribed by Luke to the Pharisees. The fact that the following parable portrays the Pharisee in a negative light may suggest that the group were Pharisees. The incident is not one of conflict in the sense we meet in the chapters leading up the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus; rather Jesus comments on some evident practises. Finally, the Pharisees make a brief re-entry in 19:39 when, during Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, they request that he silence the disciples from exclaiming him as the coming king. Again, this is not a setting where the Pharisees actively pursue him, but rather a response to the enthusiastic welcome of Jesus by the crowds. Nonetheless, this last mention of the Pharisees is followed by a short discourse on the coming destruction of Jerusalem, which in a sense seals the gloomy expectations with which the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus concludes. The change of topic in chapter 17, therefore, is hardly incidental. In rejecting Jesus throughout the "conflict" chapters, they have sealed their fate, as the parable explains; in 19:39-44 the coming punishment is spelled out.

The Parable's Second Part – (b) a Challenge to its Sources

In the discussion dedicated to the extra-biblical sources, it became evident that the parable is set in a milieu where similar stories of reversal and revelations from the world of the dead were popular. According to Luke, the parable is set in the context of a public discourse of Jesus where a large number of people are present (Lk. 15:1, 16:16:1,14). In this respect, since the parable is deliberately modelled after popular folktales of reversal, it addresses at least in part the sensitivities of those who valued such tales. Yet, in its first part the parable departs from the pattern of tales of revelations from the dead by introducing elements that are at the same time both humorous and completely unreal. Bauckham has suggested that it is often at the very point where a story departs from the expected norm that its importance lies.[625] As I explain below, the departure from the norm of a true-sounding story in the first part of the parable only sets the pace; in the second part the parable challenges and deconstructs some of the main elements of popular tales of reversal. As we have seen, such tales share three characteristics: (a) the purpose of bringing a moral improvement in the life of hearers, (b) they do not usually include a bodily resurrection, and (c) they include the presence of eyewitnesses.

The first point of departure is the rich man's certainty that if Lazarus returns from the dead, there will be a clear change in the lives of the brothers. We already saw how this concept appears in all extant stories of reversal and is a dominant element in other returns from the dead. This, however, is not the case in the parable. According to Abraham, a revelation from the grave cannot lead to repentance.

It is noteworthy that his issue becomes a point of controversy between the rich man and Abraham as the former twice requests that Lazarus be sent to the five living brothers in order that they might repent; the second time, his request is phrased in a very forceful and emphatic way: "No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent". As such, the question of the possibility of repentance through a revelation from the dead is not a mere detail, but becomes a pivotal element. The rich man's insistence not on the possibility but on the certainty of the impact of such a revelation reflects the popular attitude of the time as manifested in the tales.[626] In this respect, the rich man is not expressing his hopes or expectations alone. Rather he becomes a spokesman for the expectations of

[625] Bauckham, "Parallels," 328.
[626] J. Green, 609.

readers/hearers of the parable who might have confidence in the efficacy of messages from the dead.

Abraham's categorical answer leaves no room for questioning. Abraham states that the only agent that can lead to repentance is "Moses and the prophets" which function as a figure of speech for the Scriptures. Abraham's comment is repeated twice – first in 16:29 he mentions only "Moses and the prophets" and then in 16:31 when "Moses and the prophets" is placed in contrast to a return from the dead. The parable closes with Abraham's rejection of the rich man's premise. It seems plausible therefore, that here is a deliberate attempt to subvert folktales about the dead by undermining their reliability, and to direct the readers/hearers' minds to the Scriptures.[627]

The second point where the parable departs from other stories concerns the mode of a revelation from the dead. Our brief overview of some such tales indicated that a number of means were popular – e.g. necromancy, visits to the realm of the dead, dreams, the appearance of ghosts – but not resurrection.

In the parable it would appear that two modes of return are juxtaposed. In 16:27 the rich man requests that Abraham "send" Lazarus to his living brothers without explaining how.[628] In 16:30 he gives a little more detail by using the phrase, "if some one goes to them from the dead" (ἐάν τις ἀπό νεκρῶν πορευθῇ). This is not a common New Testament or Lukan manner of expression and certainly not one used to refer to a resurrection. The very important manuscript P^{75} uses ἐγερθῇ while 579, an admittedly late witness, reads ἀναστῇ. Beyond the two witnesses cited, manuscript support is weak for either reading. If therefore the first reading is to be preferred, then it would appear that here we have a reference to a return from the dead in a mode other than resurrection. Since a number of modes of return other than

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[627] It may be worthwhile to compare Abraham's assertion with John's account of the resurrection of Lazarus. While Abraham unequivocally maintains that a revelation from the dead cannot bring repentance, John suggests that the resurrection of Lazarus did inspire many Jews to faith in Jesus (John 11:45-8; 12:9-11). It has been suggested that the last verse of the parable, in its Lukan context, might be an allusion to the resurrection of Jesus, despite which, the Pharisees still did not believe in him. In such a case, Luke would imply that the resurrection of Jesus should have led the Pharisees to him, despite Abraham's assertion that a return from the dead cannot lead to repentance. With this in mind we can conclude that either (a) Abraham's comment is directed not so much against the power of a resurrection to influence to repentance, but more specifically against the tales of revelations from the dead, or (b) the Pharisees' rejection of Jesus while he was alive, despite the witness of the Scriptures, meant that even when he was raised, they clung to unbelief, thus verifying the truthfulness of Abraham's words.

[628] Bock, 1374.

resurrection were envisaged, one wonders whether again the rich man is asking that a message from him be sent to his brothers through Lazarus rather than for Lazarus himself to be resurrected. The specific mode is left open so that every reader familiar with tales of revelations from the dead could decide for himself/herself which mode would be most appropriate, or most effective.

To the rich man's open-ended request, Abraham gives a twofold answer. First, he refuses the request for a message from the dead as we saw earlier. Second, he affirms what is elsewhere evident in the Synoptic gospels; namely that the only way a person can return from the dead is through bodily resurrection. This is evidenced by the use of the verb ἀναστῇ in Abraham's response. In discussing the use of this word, Bauckham notes it can only denote a bodily resurrection since "the image of getting up from a prone position" implies "the rising of the dead body".[629] It appears therefore that again the rich man represents the implied audience, voicing in words what they think concerning the possible modes through which a revelation from the dead could be made. In such a case, Abraham comes down against any return or message from the dead apart from a bodily resurrection.[630]

Perhaps the most important point from which the parable departs from all the other stories is in the process through which the revelation is made. In every other case, information about the afterlife is obtained through an eyewitness, whether a living person who visits the realm of death, or a dead person who returns to inform the living. There might be one witness or more, as we have seen. Unlike these tales, the parable begins with a revelation of the afterlife without, however, clarifying the source of the information. Given the prominent role that the process of revelation plays in the other related tales, the parable's silence is all the more striking. It suggests that the lack of a process of revelation is intentional.

Directly related to this silence is the discussion in the second part of the parable. When the rich man sees his sufferings, he requests that Lazarus be sent to his five brothers. The fact that this is the only extant parable where one of the characters is named, may imply that the naming of Lazarus is modelled on the extra-biblical tales of revelations from the dead and, in line with such tales, prepares Lazarus to be

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[629] Bauckham, "Parallels," 243.

[630] The mention of Lazarus and resurrection raises the question to what extent the parable reflects the resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany (see Pearce, 359-61). Does the choice of the name for the poor man of the parable reflect on Lazarus of Bethany? Indeed, the latter was raised, but the Pharisees still did not believe in Jesus.

the ideal eyewitness who reveals the afterlife. Here therefore would have been a good opportunity for a process of revelation to be expounded. However, Abraham refuses to send Lazarus. The possibility of an eyewitness is therefore raised and dismissed.

The reason for dismissing the rich man's request is noteworthy. Abraham states that the five living brothers have "Moses and the prophets" and should listen to them. The rich man replies that a person returning from the dead would be a more powerful witness to repentance. In this respect again, the rich man seems to reflect popular belief. However, Abraham rejects the rich man's reasoning out of hand. If the brothers will not repent on the testimony of Moses and the prophets, they will not repent even if a dead person were to return from the grave. The request for the return of Lazarus is refused, not because it is beyond God's power to accomplish, nor because Abraham does not want to be helpful, but because it is unnecessary; and if it unnecessary, God will not grant it.

It appears that with Abraham's refusal the parable reaches a climax as a challenge to all tales of revelations from the dead. If something is unnecessary God will not grant it; God has neither done so in the past, nor will he do so in the future. This last of Abraham's statements attempts to destroy with one stroke the credibility and reliability of each and every tale from the dead, whether from a heathen or Jewish background, with which the readers may have been familiar. Whatever the attraction and popularity of such tales, they are not from God. Thus they are not only useless in that they cannot lead to repentance, especially in comparison to "Moses and the prophets" but, not being from God, they might be dangerous.

Conclusion

Bringing everything together, we may conclude that the parable functions as a polemic against the Pharisees, the climax of a prolonged conflict that spans several chapters in Luke. The parable is deliberately modelled after popular tales of revelations from the dead and reversal of fortunes at death.[631] The first part of the parable serves to arrest the attention by introducing a number of peculiar, unreal, even humorous elements that depart from the flow found in other tales of revelations from the dead. The parable's main thrust is delivered in the second part where in a dramatic climax Jesus compares the Pharisees to the five brothers living a life of ease

[631] Cf. Dunkerley, 321-7.

unaware of a coming catastrophe. As such, it concludes the "conflict" chapters; the Pharisees are less prominent in the subsequent chapters of Luke and disappear after 19:39-44 where Jesus describes the doom anticipated in the end of the parable.

At the same time, and in a parallel development, the parable functions as a commentary on the widespread, popular tales of revelations from the dead that transcended, cultural, linguistic and even religious barriers. Such a secondary application of the parable is understandable in light of the fact that the audience according to Luke included not only the Pharisees, to whom it is directly addressed, but also the disciples and a large number of interested Jews. Again the first part of the parable serves to attract attention through the use of peculiar and unreal elements that begin to set it apart from the other tales with their supposed realistic depictions of the afterlife. However, the main thrust of the parable comes again in the second part where the writer deliberately raises the main elements of tales of revelations from the dead, only to undermine their validity. Thus Abraham dispels the common notion that a revelation from the dead can lead to a reformed life; he rejects any confidence in a visit from the dead other than through bodily resurrection; and he strongly objects to any need for such a revelation through an eyewitness. What is not granted here is unnecessary; it has not been granted in the past, nor will it be granted in the future.

In this respect, any contribution of the parable to a Synoptic understanding of the afterlife is, in essence, negative.[632] The parable is important not for what it portrays, since it is set in the context of the popular tale-from-the-dead format that is eventually rejected. Rather, it is important for what it rejects – all tales of supposed revelations from the dead. Against such tales, it reinforces faith in the validity of the "law and the prophets" as the only reliable witness for repentance.

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[632] It is curious that in his critique of Jeremias' clear distinction between Hades and Gehenna as designating, the former the place of the dead, the latter the place of eschatological punishment, Boyd, 11-12, relies primarily on the use of Hades in Lk. 16:19-31 and proceeds to argue that the two terms are synonymous. The attempt to use such a unique (in New Testament terms) use of Hades to determine the meaning of all other New Testament occurrences is unwise.

Conclusion on Hades in the Synoptics

We have seen that while the biblical use of Hades is fairly consistent both in the Hebrew and Greek versions of the Old Testament, the early Jewish non-biblical material offers a broader viewpoint. In the latter Hades takes on additional qualities, often becoming a repository for the souls of the dead or even, in embryonic form, a place of torment and judgement. In his two texts, Matthew follows the biblical model where Hades is simply a synonym for death. Luke's use is harder to categorise. The usages in Acts follow on the biblical use and thus parallel Matthew's Hades. On Luke 10:15 we deferred judgement as there is not sufficient evidence to determine whether it is a reference to the final judgement or whether a reference to death either literally of Capernaum's destruction, or symbolically as the opposite of heaven and a sign that Capernaum will be humbled.

More problematic is the use of Hades in Luke 16:19-31, where it is without parallel in Luke's use of Hades elsewhere, in New Testament usage of Hades, or in any of Luke's passage that have a bearing on eschatology. I have argued, however, that Luke uses the parable with an aim to deconstruct popular views on the afterlife, rather than construct an alternative model to what he has presented elsewhere. The parable functions as a parody on popular tales about communication with the dead and as such should not be used to colour the understanding of Luke's use of Hades.

Part III – Abyss

Chapter XI – Background

In addition to Gehenna and Hades, two more place names have been connected to the afterlife – Abyss and Tartarus. The relation of the Abyss and Tartarus to Gehenna and/or Hades is taken for granted by some commentators. Lenski has remarked: "What is meant by the 'Abyss' into which the demons dread to be ordered is... the burning pit of hell which was prepared especially for the evil angels".[633] On a similar note Thompson asserts that to command the demons (in Lk. 8:31) to the Abyss is "to relegate them to the final defeat and destruction".[634] Likewise, Robertson calls Tartarus "the dark and doleful abode of the wicked dead like the Gehenna of the Jews".[635] Robertson might be mistaken in associating Gehenna with the abode of the dead, since the term refers rather to the punishment of the day of judgement; nonetheless, he is not unusual in seeing a connection between it and other names used for the hereafter.

The Abyss occurs only once in the gospels (Lk. 8:31), though it plays a prominent role in Revelation. Despite the brief nature of its appearance in the Synoptics, the concepts tied to it are essential to an understanding of fallen angels and the punishment reserved for them. As such, a discussion of places of punishment in the Synoptics would be incomplete without a discussion of the Abyss. I will begin this chapter with a discussion of the background of the Abyss. Tartarus is absent from the gospels and occurs only once in the New Testament in 2 Peter 2:4. It lies therefore beyond the immediate scope of this study. However, the concepts bound up with the Abyss and Tartarus are closely related. Because of this, I have chosen to discuss Tartarus as an excursus appended onto the background discussion of the Abyss, looking both at the broader context of Tartarus in Greek and Jewish literature, and, in more detail, to its use in 2 Peter 2:4. This part will conclude with an exegetical analysis of Luke 8:31.

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[633] Lenski, *Luke*, 473.
[634] G.H.P. Thompson, 140.
[635] Robertson, 162.

The Abyss in the LXX and extra-biblical Jewish literature

The word "Abyss" is a transliteration of the Greek ἄβυσσος, a compound word consisting of the negating ἀ– and βυσσος.[636] The latter, in turn, derives from βυθός, which is used to refer to the bottom or the depth of the sea.[637] Liddell and Scott render the word as "bottomless," "unfathomed," "great deep," "underworld," or "infinite void".[638] Bauer uses the following words to describe it: "Abyss," "depth," "underworld".[639] In early Jewish and Christian writings it occurs primarily as a noun, though in Greek it can and does appear as an adjective.[640]

In the LXX ἄβυσσος translates primarily the Hebrew תהם. As such, it is a common word and refers primarily to the deep waters whether of the sea or of the primeval ocean waters believed to have existed below the surface of the earth. Thus the Greek of Genesis 7:11, in describing the sources of the Flood, reads that "the fountains of the deep [ἄβυσσος]... burst forth".[641] It can also be used for other sources of plentiful water. In Deuteronomy 8:7 God promised that he would lead Israel into a land where there are "torrents [ἄβυσσος] of water" in the mountains and plains.

A couple of texts depart from the above use. In Psalm 106:26 ἄβυσσος is set as the opposite of heaven – "the [sailors in a tempestuous sea] go up to the heaven, and go down to the depths [ἄβυσσος]; their soul melts because of troubles....". Bauer construes in this contrast a reference to Hades,[642] which was often considered the lowest place beneath the earth and the opposite of heaven.[643] However, such a conclusion is without support from the context. The surrounding literary unit (106:23-32) is a discussion of God's power over the sea. The "heaven and abyss" contrast is probably little more than a poetical expression to describe the movement of the boat in a stormy sea and fear such movement would cause to the sailors. Therefore ἄβυσσος can only be a reference to the sea.

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[636] As such, it is was not initially a proper name in the sense it later appears, for example in Lk. 8:31. Because of its later association with a place of confinement I will generally refer to it with a capital, the Abyss.
[637] Bauer, 148.
[638] Liddell and Scot, 4.
[639] Bauer, 2.
[640] N. Turner, 208.
[641] Ἐρράγησαν.. οἱ πηγαί τῆς ἀβύσσου.
[642] Bauer, 2.
[643] Cf. Is. 14:13,15: "You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven...', but you are brought down to Sheol".

A more suggestive use appears in Psalm 71:20 where the writer praises God for delivering him from "the deep places [ἄβυσσος] of the earth". The Hebrew behind ἄβυσσος is the usual תהם. A. Weiser sees here a reference to a large body of water, namely the Flood, and suggests that the psalmist is thanking God for deliverance from that catastrophe.[644] Others, like A. Anderson, while not denying the possibility of reference to water, suggest that here the waters under the earth have become a metaphor for Sheol.[645] Anderson's suggestion is plausible; but if correct, ἄβυσσος has still not become a synonym for Sheol, but rather is linked to it in the context of a metaphorical statement. Alternatively, "the deep places of the earth" might refer to neither the Flood nor Sheol. In the beginning of the verse, the psalmist praises God who, though he made him see "many troubles and calamities," yet would revive him again. In this context, the "deep places of the earth" may only be a metaphorical expression for these "troubles and calamities" from which the writer expected release.

In the extra-biblical Jewish literature, the use of ἄβυσσος most closely follows that of the LXX. In SE 1 Enoch 60:7, Leviathan is said to dwell in the "Abyss of the oceans". In 2 Baruch 59:5, the seer saw the depths of the Abyss (sea) together with other natural elements like wind, fire, and rain. In 4 Ezra the writer describes the power of God by reference to nature, the work of God's creative power, and mentions *inter alia*, God's ability to dry up the Abyss.

There are, however, some noteworthy departures, primarily in the Enoch literature. In SE 1 Enoch 54:5 an angel takes the patriarch on a tour and shows him a number of elements including a valley of fire and chains of immense weight being prepared for the fallen angelic armies of Azazel. These beings will be thrown into an "Abyss of complete condemnation" in what appears to be the eschatological punishment. In another vision in Animal Apocalypse (hence AA) 1 Enoch 88:1-3 a heavenly star that has fallen is bound up and thrown into an Abyss "full of fire and flame and full of the pillar of fire".[646] This is, apparently, a temporal punishment till the day of judgement. This use of an Abyss to describe the temporary abode of fallen

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[644] Weiser, 500.
[645] A. Anderson, 517.
[646] Nickelsburg, *Enoch*, 374, correctly notes that the punishment of the fallen star in 88:1 parallels the punishment meted out to Asael in BW 1 En. 10:4-5.

angels is paralleled in Jubilees 10:7 where the evil angels are also cast "into an Abyss till the day of judgement".[647]

In AA 1 Enoch 90:24-27, not only one star is thrown into a fiery Abyss, but a large number of fallen stars whose sin was sexual immorality. The motif of fallen stars being tied and cast into a fiery Abyss is an allusion to the fall of the Watchers, or angels who fell before the Flood, according to one popular tradition (cf. BW 1 En. 6-8). The fallen stars are followed into the Abyss by the "bad shepherds", apparently the corrupt leaders of Israel.

When the first fiery Abyss has received the stars and shepherds, Enoch sees a second Abyss opened "in the middle of the ground" to the right of "that house". The middle of the ground represents Palestine and more specifically Jerusalem, and "that house" is likely a reference to the temple.[648] In this second Abyss the bad sheep that have gone astray are thrown into fire. It seems therefore that in these Enoch texts, the punishment of the day of judgement takes place in a deep, fiery Abyss that at least of the second Abyss of 90:24-27 where the blind sheep are cast may be a reference to the punishment of Gehenna. In EE 1 Enoch 10:13 an Abyss appears again as the place where the fallen Watchers are thrown in the day of judgement, after their confinement under the rocks for seventy generations.

Has the Abyss from the Enoch literature become a synonym for the Gehenna of other writings? Not quite. It is important to note that the Abyss has not become a proper name, for the place of punishment. Rather, it is used *descriptively* – punishment will take place *in an abyss*, that is, in a low place of the earth. This distinction between the Abyss as a proper name and the abyss as a descriptive noun is important and clearly differentiates it from Gehenna and Hades.[649]

This brief overview of ἄβυσσος in second temple Jewish literature indicates that the term was used primarily to describe large bodies of water, be they the primeval ocean, the waters below the surface of the earth, or the seas, rivers and bountiful springs on the earth's surface. In a couple of instances it is used as a metaphor for Sheol, but such use is neither common nor prominent. 1 Enoch, in

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[647] Cf. the discussion on Tartarus below.

[648] This is evident from 1 En. 91where God destroys the "house" and builds a new one.

[649] Gehenna had always been a proper name, first of a valley, then of the punishment of the day of suffering (see Part I). Hades initially was a common noun meaning "the unseen place" but in Second Temple Jewish and early Christian literature, is always used with reference to the grave or the abode of the dead, and has become a proper name (see Part II).

contrast, while maintaining the common meaning of Abyss, goes beyond it and uses the word to describe both the temporal, usually fiery, imprisonment of the fallen angels till the day of judgement, and the punishment of the day of judgement itself, both on the fallen angels and on unfaithful Jews represented by the bad shepherds and the blind sheep. In such texts, the Abyss is reminiscent of Gehenna. Nonetheless, even in such texts there is a decided difference in that Gehenna is the name of the place of punishment, whereas Abyss is more a descriptive noun for the type of punishment.

"Abyss" in the New Testament

Apart from Luke 8:31, the Abyss appears once in Romans 10:7 and seven times in Revelation.[650] Luke and Revelation share some thematic unity on the use of the Abyss. Thus before examining the relevant texts, I will first discuss briefly the text in Romans.

In Romans 10:7 the Abyss is often assumed to refer to the abode of the dead.[651] Bocher maintains that New Testament writers took over the threefold division of the world common in Jewish cosmology – heaven, earth, underworld (where Hades and Gehenna are supposedly located) – and that at least in Romans 10:7 ἄβυσσος simply denotes the realm of the dead.[652] This assertion calls for a brief discussion. Romans 10:7 consists of a quotation from Deuteronomy 30:12-13[653] and a brief midrashic exposition. In Deuteronomy the writer maintains that God's commands are not far removed so as to be inaccessible, but rather are close at hand. The LXX reads: "Neither is it [the commandment] beyond the seas, saying, who will go over for us to the other side of the sea and take it for us". The LXX for "sea" has θάλασσα to translate the Hebrew ים rather than ἄβυσσος, which usually translates תהם. Paul's quotation of the passage instead reads, "Who will go down to the Abyss?"[654] Paul therefore has changed θάλασσα to ἄβυσσος and the direction of the journey from "going over the sea" to "going down to the Abyss". He then

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[650] Rev. 9:1-2,11; 11:7; 17:3-8; 20:1,3.
[651] Jeremias, TDNT, 9:11.
[652] Böcher, EDNT, 1:4.
[653] Barrett, *Romans*, 199, maintains that it is not a direct quotation; rather Paul utilizes the language and motif of Deut. 30:12-13. Barclay, *Romans*, 149, views Paul's words as an allegory based on Deut. 30:12-13. Dunn, *Romans*, 603, more correctly, argues that it is indeed a quotation and notes related renderings in near contemporary writings (2 Bar. 3:29-30; Philo *Post.* 84-5; *Neof.* Dt. 30:12-13).
[654] τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον.

substitutes "Christ" for "the commandment" to make the assertion that Christ is nearby and nobody needs to go down to the Abyss to bring him up from the realm of the dead – he has already risen. It is not clear if this change in the quotation from Deuteronomy is Paul's paraphrase or comes from another text no longer extant.[655] If Paul was indeed quoting from a variant Greek text, then the correlation between ἄβυσσος and the realm of the dead rests not so much on the use of ἄβυσσος or on its selection to represent the realm of the dead, but rather on the liberal midrashic application of a text that in itself takes no interest in the afterlife. If, on the other hand, Paul intentionally substituted ἄβυσσος for θάλασσα then clearly he sees ἄβυσσος as encompassing Hades or the grave within its meaning. In the light of the fact that no extant LXX manuscripts have ἄβυσσος in the place of θάλασσα, it is not misleading to suppose that we have to ascribe an intention to Paul's phraseology and assume that indeed the Abyss can represent the grave.

In Revelation ἄβυσσος is used consistently to refer to the abode of evil spirits or powers depicted as animals of different sorts. In Revelation 9:1-2 and 11 an angel[656] sounds a trumpet and the shaft of the Abyss is opened. Out of it comes a swarm of locusts on a mission to cause suffering to all unbelieving humanity.[657] The swarm is obviously not made up of real locusts. It represents either a demonic host or some evil human power.[658] At the head of the swarm is destruction personified. The locusts are said to have the "authority of scorpions" (9:3). Aune notes that the authority of scorpions is the fear they inspire to animals and humans because of their very painful, sometimes deadly, sting.[659] Characteristic therefore of these demons/locusts is that they intimidate, tyrannize and terrorize the inhabitants of the earth who have not received the seal of God (9:4).[660] The description of the Abyss as

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[655] Lyonnet, 502-5, and McNamara, *New Testament*, 70-81, are of the opinion that perhaps in a no longer extant reading of Dt. 30:12-13, the horizontal justaposition heaven/ends of the sea had already been replaced by a verticl one, heaven/sheol. With the absence of concrete early evidence (their conclusion is based on Neofiti, a late witness) the question remains undecided. Dunn, *Romans*, 606, the horizontal and vertical contrasts as equivalent.

[656] Swete, *Revelation*, 115, considers this angel to be Satan, (he cites Mt. 26:19; Rev. 1:18; Sl. En. 42:1). This is unlikely since in Rev. 20:1-3, it is an angel from heaven that has the key to the Abyss. He binds Satan and casts him in the Abyss for a thousand years.

[657] Mounce, 193.

[658] Aune, 531-532.

[659] Aune, 527.

[660] Aune, 527. Beale, 494-5, points to parallels with the LXX language of Exodus plagues as well as the reference to smoke coming out of the Abyss and suggests this is a picture of divine judgement. This is plausible but not likely since the guiding force in the activity of the locusts is the fallen star,

having a shaft suggests an underground location; however, as Caird points out, this location below the ground is not to be understood geographically, but rather theologically – a power that is evil in nature.[661] It is worth noting that the swarm of locusts is set loose by a "star" that has "fallen" from heaven (9:1). This star has been invariably identified with a fallen angel, Satan, or an angel of God. The last of the three suggestions is least plausible in the light of the fact that nowhere else in the Revelation is an angel of God said to have fallen. The first two suggestions, especially the association of the fallen star with Satan finds support in other "falls".[662]

In 11:7 a beast is pictured coming out of the Abyss. The beast that emerges is evil and sets out to destroy the two witnesses of God. Initially it succeeds, but eventually the two witnesses are raised to heaven to be seen by all. In 17:8 the seer again sees a beast coming out of the Abyss.[663] This second beast is also evil and wins the admiration of all the people whose names "are not written in the book of life"; but it goes eventually to destruction.[664]

It is commonly accepted that the beast-imagery of Revelation draws on the motifs of Daniel 7 where beasts represent kingdoms.[665] It is at least plausible, therefore, that in the author's use of beast imagery, the readers would understand that kingdoms are implied, with Rome being a prime candidate.[666] The association beast-kingdom might be strengthened by the fact that Babylon is pictured as an impure woman in the same context with the second beast from the Abyss (17:3-7). The two powers, Babylon and beast, co-operate to lead the world astray. Since the beasts of 11:7 and 17:8 are probably intended to represent human kingdoms, their ascent from the Abyss cannot be a literal ascending from a subterranean region; it more likely represents the nature of their work. In apocalyptic literature kingdoms are often led

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Satan. The motif is more compatible with evil being let lose on the earth than of divine initiative to punish sinful humanity. Cf. Mounce, 194.

[661] Caird, *Revelation*, 118.

[662] Cf. Mounce, 192. Compare with the fall of Satan in 12:7-10 (cf. Lk. 10:18), and also the fall of Babylon in 14:8; 18:2.

[663] Swete, *Revelation*, 219, mistakenly assumes that since the beast comes our of the Abyss, and in 13:3 it had a mortal wound, then it died and rose again. In such a case, the Abyss becomes equivalent of death or the grave. Swete fails to see that though the beast received a mortal wound, its wound was healed (13:3) causing the whole world to marvel (13:3-4). The beast did not die and therefore did not rise from the dead.

[664] Beale, 864-5, holds that the beast of 17:8 tries to imitate Christ in that it was, and is not, but will arise out of the Abyss in a similar way that Jesus died and was raised. While, however, Jesus is now alive forever (Rev. 1:18), the beast goes to destruction (17:8).

[665] E.g. Caird, *Revelation*, 161-3, Beale, 588-9. Mounce, 225, sees the best here as a possible reference to the beast of Daniel 7:7 and associates it with the major antagonist of the church, the antichrist.

[666] Beale, 588; Beasley-Murray, 250-8; Caird, *Revelation*, 216-7.

by supernatural powers.[667] The beasts, being evil forces that oppress the people of God and lead the world into apostasy, are guided by evil spirits of a chthonian nature, and are thus evil themselves, and in this respect can be said to ascend from the Abyss.

The next and last mention of the Abyss is in 20:1-3.[668] Here, the apocalyptic conflict between the people of God and the evil, beastly powers is nearing its end. Evil has been defeated and instead of another evil power ascending *from* the Abyss, the evil power *par excellence*, Satan himself is bound up by an angel and thrown *into* the Abyss. The binding and sealing of Satan here, just like the opening of the shaft of the Abyss by a good angel in 9:1, represents God's ultimate authority over demonic forces.[669] Satan is sealed and remains in the Abyss for a thousand years. The description of the fall of Satan has a close parallel in 12:9 where, after a battle between Michael and his angels on the one hand and Satan and his angels on the other, the latter are thrown out of heaven. The language of 20:3 follows closely the language of 12:9:

καὶ ἐβλήθη... ὁ Σατανᾶς... ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν (12:9)

καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτόν [Σατανᾶν] εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον (20:3)

Of course, two different falls are envisaged. After his fall on earth in 12:9 Satan proceeds to persecute the pure woman and her seed; after the fall in 20:3, Satan bothers noone for the simple reason that everybody is dead (19:21; 20:5,7). In this respect, in 12:9 Satan is thrown into a populated earth and proceeds to persecute his enemies, while in 20:3 he is thrown and sealed in the Abyss, which could be a desolate earth.[670] The throwing and tying of Satan into the Abyss thus limits his power. He is a prisoner (20:7). The purpose of this act is specifically stated to be that "he may not deceive the nations any more" (20:3).[671] Thus, when he is released after the thousand years, he manages to deceive the nations and leads them in an ultimate war against God, only to be finally and conclusively defeated (20:7-9).

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[667] In Dan. 10:21-22, Michael is the leader of Israel, who has a standoff with the angelic leader of Persia, before the leader of Greece appears. In Rev. 9:11 the hosts of locusts have an evil angelic leader named is Abaddon in Hebrew and Apollyon in Greek.

[668] The description is perhaps inflenced by Is. 24:2-2 (Aune, 1078).

[669] Beale, 984-5; Aune, 1083.

[670] See discussion by Mounce, 352-3 where Mounce counters arguments that the binding of Satan here relates to the present age.

[671] Aune, 1083 underlines the fact that deception is closely associated with Satan (Rev. 12:9; 20:10) and appears often in eschatological contexts (Mt. 24:4; Mk. 13:22; 2 Tim. 3:13; 1 John 4:6; Rev. 13:14; 19:20; 20:8).

In summary, the discussion of Revelation reveals two things. First, there is a definite relation between the Abyss and the ability of evil spirits to cause suffering to humans. The ascent of the locusts in Revelation 9:1,3, and 11, and of the two beasts of 9:7 and 17:8 consistently results in suffering for humans. In contrast, the throwing of Satan into the Abyss limits his power to deceive the nations. This motif departs from the most common depiction of the Abyss as a large body of water. It also departs from 1 Enoch texts that depict a deep Abyss of fire as the place of eschatological punishment; there is no concept of punishment in the Abyss in Revelation. It has some points of contact with 1 Enoch texts that depict the Abyss as a temporary abode of some angelic beings. However, there are also definite contrasts. In Revelation the Abyss is not the abode of a specific group of angels; Satan himself is eventually cast there for a time. It is not a closed place; rather evil can come out of it.

The other thing to be noted concerns its location. While the Abyss is always pictured as a low place from which beasts ascend or into which Satan is thrown, it is not strictly speaking understood as an underground locale. The fact that human kingdoms are pictured as ascending from the Abyss suggests more that it is a general term that depicts the release of evil powers upon the face of the earth.

Excursus
Tartarus

In addition to the Abyss, another place name, Tartarus, is also associated with punishment and bears a close relationship to the Abyss. Tartarus is absent from the Synoptics and occurs only once in the New Testament in 2 Peter 2:4 in the verb form ταρταρώσας – "to cast into" or "hold captive in Tartarus".[672] It is also rare in Jewish literature. It is most commonly associated with fallen angels and as such may shed light on the Abyss and its use in Luke 8:31. Therefore, an overview of its use in the relevant literature is relevant to an understanding of the Abyss. In this excursus I shall first give an overview of its use in non-Christian writings, beginning with Greek mythology where it first appears and moving on to Jewish writings. Then we shall turn out attention to 2 Peter 2:4 and the related text in Jude 6 and attempt to draw conclusions as to possible implications on the understanding of the Abyss.

Tartarus and the Titans in Greek Mythology

The origin of the term Tartarus[673] is to be found in Greek mythology. The main point of reference is Hesiod's *Theogony*.[674] The story begins with Uranus and Gaia who gave birth to the twelve titans, the three one-eyed cyclops and the three hundred-armed hecatoncheires – all of whom

[672] Bauer, 805, Liddel and Scott, 1759.
[673] Tartarus was son of the sky and the earth (Aether and Gaea), born after Chaos, and himself father of two giants. His name became associated with a place beneath Hades (*Paus. 9.27.2*, Peck, 1528,)
[674] For a brief outline of Tartarus and the myth of the Titans see Grant and Hazel, 342, Pearson, 38-41.

were gigantic beings.[675] Some of the children of these were also considered titans but not all; out of the marriage of two of Uranus' children, Kronos and Rhea, came the family of the gods. Uranus, jealous of his children, imprisoned them in Tartarus. Kronos, in rebellion against his father, injured and defeated him, thus becoming master of the universe. From the blood of Uranus' wound came the race of giants. Kronos was also cruel to his children and one of them, Zeus, with the help of the hecatoncheires, rebelled against Kronos. In the ensuing battle, called the *Titanomachy*, some of the Titans sided with Kronos, a few with Zeus, while others remained neutral. After a ten-year conflict Zeus emerged victorious and became the greatest in the family of gods.[676] The defeated Kronos ended up as lord of the Isles of the Blessed, the place believed to be reserved for the righteous dead.

In contrast to Kronos, the defeated Titans ended up again in Tartarus, where Uranus had initially imprisoned them and Kronos had temporarily released them. Tartarus was said to be a place deep below Hades which itself was beneath the earth – indeed as "far beneath Hades as heaven is above the earth".[677] It had large gates of bronze behind which the titans were imprisoned in eternal gloom. The gates were guarded by the hecatoncheires. It is not clear in Greek literature if the titans were evil.

Tartarus in Second Temple Jewish Literature

In the LXX Tartarus is used only three times. The first is in Job 40:20,[678] in a discussion between God and Job concerned with Behemoth. The text in question reads: "...when he has gone up to a steep mountain, he causes joy to the quadrupeds in the deep [τάρταρος]". The question as to what exactly Tartarus represents here depends at least partly on who or what Behemoth is. M. H. Pope[679] suggests that Behemoth was a mythological creature since some of its attributes given in Job go beyond what a description of an animal would permit,[680] and since it appears in connection to Leviathan who in a number of texts is depicted as a mythological creature.[681] If Behemoth is indeed a mythological creature, then Pope suggests that Tartarus here would be the netherworld in line with the Greek use of the noun. In support for this assertion he points out that Tartarus here translates the Hebrew שׁם which refers to the place of the dead (Job 1:21, 3:17).

In contrast to Pope, the majority of commentators agree that Behemoth and Leviathan, at least within the context of Job, represent two animals – a hippopotamus in the case of the former, and a crocodile in the case of the latter.[682] Language that goes beyond the characteristics of theses animals is understood as poetic exaggeration. Indeed, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that Behemoth refers to a hippopotamus, or to another similar animal. Both the Masoretic and LXX of Job 40:21 have Behemoth sleeping under the trees, in the vicinity of the papyrus plants and the reeds, which does not befit a description for a mythological beast. Likewise, the assertion that שׁם refers to the netherworld is misleading; שׁם simply means "there"[683] and takes the meaning of "the place of the dead" in Job 1:21 and 3:17 only because of the context in which it appears.[684] Finally, if Tartarus was understood as a reference to the netherworld, the mention of quadrupeds is bewildering. Did the author envision animals as roaming around in Tartarus and finding joy when Behemoth departs to climb steep mountains? Not likely. Tartarus here is to be understood as a reference to the watery places which hippopotamus frequents. Behemoth's departure from the "deep" towards the mountain (since hippopotamus is not strictly speaking a water animal) causes joy to the other animals by the water since his imposing presence is now gone.

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[675] Hes. *Theog. 125-135.*
[676] Hes. *Theog. 617-735.*
[677] Hes. *Theog. 720-21.* Barclay, *James and Peter,* 379; Peck, 1528.
[678] Job 40:20 in the Masoretic.
[679] Pope, 326.
[680] See Job 40:17, 18, 24.
[681] Pope, 329-330, sees a connection between Leviathan and the Ugaritic sea monster Lotan that was often depicted as having seven heads. He cites some rabbinic sources: *Mid. Rabbah* Lev. xiii.3, *b. Bab. Bath.* 75a, according to which, in the Messianic Age the pious Jews would hunt Leviathan and Behemoth for sport and eat their flesh. Alternatively, God himself would slay Leviathan.
[682] For further discussion on Behemoth, cf. Rowley, 255.
[683] Baumgartner, 4:1546-8.
[684] Indeed, in Job 1:21 שׁם does not even refer to the "place of the dead". Job laments that he came naked from his mother's womb and naked he will return "there" – obviously not to the womb, neither to a world of "Hades" since that was not the place he came from originally, but most likely, to lifelessness.

The second occurrence of Tartarus is in Job 41:22-23,[685] this time in relation to another impressive animal, Leviathan. Here there is a close relation between Tartarus and the Abyss: "He [Leviathan] makes the deep boil like a brazen cauldron; and he regards the sea as a pot of ointment; and the lowest part of the deep [τάρταρον τῆς ἀβύσσου] as a captive; he reckons the deep [ἄβυσσον] as his range". The "deep" where Leviathan lives is clearly paralleled to the "sea". The "lowest part of the deep", therefore, can only be a reference to the depths of the "sea" (or other body of water?) [686] that mysterious Leviathan could wade.

The third text is Proverbs 30:16,[687] which reads: "The grave [LXX – ᾅδης, Hebrew – Sheol], and the love of a woman, Tartarus and the earth not filled with water; water also and fire will not say, 'It is enough'". There is no equivalent to "Tartarus" in the Masoretic which might suggest that "Tartarus" was added by the translators in order to bring the elements that never say "enough" from five in the Masoretic to six in the LXX so that they can be arranged in pairs:

the grave	the love of a woman
Tartarus	the earth not filled with water
water	fire

B. Pearson has assumed that Tartarus is the LXX rendering of the Hebrew "Sheol" and thus refers to the netherworld.[688] This assertion is obviously wrong. "Sheol" here is rendered by ᾅδης ("the grave" in the above translation) as is common in the LXX; "Tartarus" is an addition for which there is no Hebrew parallel in the Masoretic. As such the exact meaning of Tartarus in this text is elusive. It could be argued that it is the equivalent of Sheol if we assume that the first dyad of elements that never say "enough" is in some way paralleled to the second, though this is far from obvious. More plausibly, Tartarus is again a reference to the sea. In such a case it would serve as a contrast to "the earth not filled with water" – as the dry earth is never filled with water despite all the rain, likewise the sea never overflows despite all the water that flows and rains into it. This suggestion is supported by the contrasting parallelism of the other two dyads: water is the opposite of fire, and the coldness of the grave is a fitting contrast to the warmth of a woman's love.

Before proceeding to other contemporary literature, we find it useful to look at how "titans" is used, since in Greek mythology they were the ones thrown into Tartarus. The titans are mentioned three times – in LXX 2 Kings 5:12 and 22 and in 1 Chronicles 11:15. In all three instances the translators render the Hebrew "valley of the Rephaim" with "valley of the titans". The valley is mentioned in the context of an attack of the Philistines against Israel during the early years of David's reign. The Philistines are said to have camped in the valley of the Rephaim. "Titans", therefore, in these instances, is the equivalent of "Rephaim".

"Rephaim" denotes two concepts. First, it is the name of a tribe of men of large stature believed to have lived in the vicinity of Canaan in a very early period but defeated and dispossessed by the Moabites.[689] Only a few survived, one of them being Og, king of Bashan, who in turn was later defeated and killed by the Israelites as they neared Canaan on their way from the Exodus from Egypt.[690] The Rephaim lived and died after the Flood. Second, the word is also used to refer to the dead. The Rephaim are most commonly translated in the LXX with the noun γίγαντες,"giants".[691]

The use of "titans" instead of "giants" in the three texts mentioned above has led Pearson to suggest that here is evidence of the influence of the Greek myth.[692] This assertion is somewhat forced. Pearson might have had a better case if the word "titan" was used in some description of the ancient tribes, of their nearly superhuman stature or strength of achievements. Indeed, there are numerous references to humans of large stature in the Hebrew – in addition to the Rephaim, the Anakim and

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[685] Job 41:32 in the Masoretic.

[686] Whether the literal sea or any large body of water is envisaged is not clear. If Leviathan represents a mythical monster, the reference could be to the literal sea. If, however, Leviathan is the crocodile, the "sea" could refer to the Nile, or to other rives. Crocodiles were attested in ancient times, not only in the Nile, but also in some of the rivers and brooks of Palestine and its environs.

[687] Prov. 24:51 in the Masoretic.

[688] Pearson, 37.

[689] Cf. the discussion of the "Rephaim" in Schnell, 35.

[690] Deut. 2:11, 20, 3:11.

[691] E.g. Gen. 14:5; Josh. 12:4; 13:12; 1 Chron. 11:15; 14:9; 20:4,6,8; Is. 14:9.

[692] Pearson, 38ff, also sees a connection between the "giants" of the LXX and the Greek myths. Such an approach is presumptuous. The Masoretic knows of races of great stature so the appearance of γίγαντες in the LXX does not in itself necessitate a direct literary link to Greek myths.

Nephilim. That "titan" is used only in these three texts in passing, almost as a footnote to name a valley and thus set the context of the battle between David and the Philistines, more likely suggests that the translator felt that it more appropriate to translate the name of the valley with a proper name like Titans rather than with a common noun like γίγαντες.

The overview of the use of Tartarus in the LXX suggests that the word has been detached from the myth of the titanomachy with which it was originally associated.[693] It is used to refer primarily to large bodies of water and as such bears some resemblance to ἄβυσσος with which it once appears together (Job. 41:22-23). "Titans" likewise seems to have been at least partly detached from its original associations with Greek myth and has become another name, a proper noun, an equivalent of "giants".

The evidence from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha is slightly more abundant and diverse in meaning. In the Sibylline Oracles 1:9-10 Tartarus is the element that draps around the earth ever since creation. J. J. Collins translates it as "netherworld" which is rather surprising.[694] The ancients believed the inhabited earth was surrounded by a large ocean. Insofar that the location of Tartarus is "around" the earth rather than "beneath" it would suggest that Tartarus here is a reference to this encompassing ocean. The word is used in a descriptive context without any negative connotation; such use seems to preclude the meaning of "netherworld".

In the same work (lines 109-119), Tartarus, in contrast, is placed in an altogether different setting. The writer describes the different generations of people after the creation of the world. The fourth generation was evil. Some perished in battle and went to the netherworld; God removed others in wrath, "draping them around with great Tartarus" under the base of the earth. Tartarus here at first appears to be distinct from the netherworld – some go to the netherworld others to Tartarus – but more likely it is a parallel expression. It is the place where dead humans go. As such it is the equivalent of Hades. This text is, furthermore, important in that it calls one of the evil generations "Watchers". This is the title given elsewhere to the angels of BW (e.g. 1 En. 1:5, 12:4) who lusted after women, which in turn is thought to have influenced 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. In language echoed by BW, 2 Peter and Jude, the Watchers are sent to Tartarus tied with "unbreakable bonds" to await the punishment of the day of judgement. In contrast, however, to BW 1 Enoch, the Watchers of the Sibylline Oracles are not angelic beings, but men with "sleepless minds".

In the Sibylline Oracles 2:303 Tartarus has become a dark and dank place that is closely associated with Gehenna though it is not clear if the two are identical. It is presided over by evil angels who torture sinners in fiery punishment till they repay threefold the sins they have committed while on earth. While this might suggest a limited time of punishment, the author asserts instead that sinners will long for death to liberate them from their tortures. Death, however, will evade them. The setting is therefore clearly after the day of judgement. Two elements suggest that this text is probably the work of a much later Christian editor. In a clear case of dependence on the gospels, the sinners are said to "gnash their teeth".[695] Likewise, their punishment is due to the fact that when God gave seven ages to humankind, these sinners failed to take advantage of the repentance that can be wrought through the "holy virgin".[696]

Gehenna and Tartarus appear together again in book 4:186.[697] The day will come when "murky Tartarus," a "heap of earth", the "black recesses of hell" and Gehenna will cover all sinners. The setting is the eschatological judgement preceded by a general bodily resurrection. As such, it is set in the same chronological timeframe as Sibylline Oracles 2:303 but differs from all the rest of the texts examined so far. The writer here envisages the complete annihilation of all sinners. There is no

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[693] Pearson, 38ff likewise sees a strong connection between the myth of the Titans and Tartarus, on the one hand, and a number of texts in the LXX of which he deals most fully with Is. 16:29, and the phrase γῆ τῶν ἀσεβῶν. The hypothesis is strained as it relies on a series of uncertain reconstructions. While Jewish writers did not hesitate on occasion to use Greek names like Tartarus, Hades or the Abyss, quite often these were divested from their original context in Greek mythology. We have seen this to be the case with the use of Hades in the LXX and the Synoptics where it is closer to Sheol than to the Greek Hades; we have also seen it in the discussion of the Abyss and Tartarus so far, in that both are used, for example, in the LXX to denote large bodies of waters.

[694] Collins, OTP, 2:335.

[695] Line 305. Compare with Mt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28. The phrase "gnashing of teeth" is a favorite of Matthew as the above texts indicate, but it is virtually unknown from contemporary literature.

[696] Sib. Or. 3:310. Collins, OTP, 2:300, calls the Sibylline Oracles a Jewish work with "extensive Christian redaction".

[697] Chester, 246-8.

description of torments, no mention of fire, no hint that evil angels are in any way involved. The fact that a "heap of earth" covers sinners suggests that Tartarus is another name for the grave or death; yet, not the temporal grave and the temporal death from which the author envisaged a bodily resurrection, but rather the eschatological death from which there will be no resurrection.

In BW 1 Enoch 20:2, it is the good angel Uriel who is in charge of Tartarus, while Michael is in charge of the chaos. What is perhaps more surprising is the lack of more references to Tartarus in BW 1 Enoch since it deals at most length with the fallen Watchers which in turn somewhat resembles the Greek myth of the Titans whence the concept of Tartarus emerged.

The idea of good angels presiding over Tartarus is reversed in the Christian Testament of Solomon 6:3. In a discussion between Solomon and Beelzebub, the arch demon describes how his fellow demon keeps sinners bound in Tartarus. Tartarus thus is removed from the eschatological horizon and is brought back in time to become a place of temporal residence for some of the dead. Nonetheless, it is still a place of suffering, though what exactly this suffering involves is not made clear.

In Pseudo-Philo 60:3 there is a casual if obscure reference that seems to associate Tartarus with the chaos of the earth before creation.[698] As such it could be related to the primeval ocean that covered the face of the earth, and hence with the Abyss – an association that appears in the LXX.

Finally, in the Greek Apocalypse of Ezra 4:7-12 the famous scribe sees king Herod being punished in Tartarus, which is placed somewhere in the bowels of the earth. To get there, Ezra descends 500 steps and then another 85 and there sees Herod being tormented without mercy. He then descends further and sees a number of sinners likewise suffering punishment. Ezra goes down still further and sees the worm that does not sleep and the fire that consumes sinners. At the lower end of this descent of suffering, Ezra sees the foundations of ἀπώλεια and the Abyss.[699] It is obvious that in this late work[700] different nouns used in earlier writings with a negative connotation have been put together to represent different stages or levels of punishment for the wicked. Such a graded use of terms would be relevant to the study of the development of concepts in the later stages of Christian tradition, but has little to offer to an understanding of the Synoptic depiction of the fate of sinners and angels.

Philo in a number of passages also mentions Tartarus. His use is fairly consistent in meaning though it is not clear if he understands Tartarus to be the place of the dead, or a prison house of some sort, either for humans or for evil things; and if a prison, whether a symbolic or literal one. Thus he contrasts the fate of two persons; the proselyte to Judaism will be taken to heaven while the noble-born who defiled "the sterling of his high lineage will be dragged down to Tartarus itself and profound darkness".[701] This contrast between heaven and Tartarus may suggest concepts of an afterlife, but not necessarily. Philo does not think of the afterlife here. Rather he suggests that one who does good will be exalted while the noble who does evil will be brought low *in this life*. In another instance the "flames of desire" are said to be "a true Tartarus"; a passion that keeps people imprisoned in a moral/philosophical rather than a literal sense.[702] In a somewhat parallel statement, those who are slaves to their passions will be drawn down into Tartarus.[703] Finally, Tartarus also becomes a prison for ideas rather than people. Philo praises Gaius for his wise governorship, which has driven mischiefs to the "outmost corners and recesses of Tartarus" and instead has brought good from the ends of the earth to the inhabited world and also suggests that all bad things should be thrown to deepest Tartarus and there lie in concealment.[704] It would appear thus that Philo draws from Greek imagery of Tartarus as an underground prison but allows literal interpretation to recede in favour of a more moral/philosophical application.

Turning to the titans, they appear three times in the Sibylline Oracles. The first mention is in book 1:307-324 where they are said to have been a race of men of large stature who lived after the Flood and turned against God. The result of their rebellion will be that raging waters will come over them, though what these waters really are is not clear. Shortly before the mention of the Titans, the writer has made reference to Acheron, the river of Greek mythology across which Charon would ferry the dead souls on the way to Hades. The mention of Acheron in close connection with the Titans aims

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[698] Harrington, OTP, 2:373.
[699] Stone, OTP, 1:564ff.
[700] M.E. Stone (OTP, 1:563) dates it sometime between AD 250 and 850.
[701] *Praem.* 152.
[702] *Q. Gen.* IV.234.
[703] *Q. Ex.* II.40.
[704] *Leg.* 49 and 103.

to draw a link to Greek mythology.[705] Indeed, the Sibylline Oracles were primarily Jewish (and later Christian) apologetic writings, presented in the format of the pronouncements of the Greek prophetesses – the Sibyls. As such, the presence of Greek names with mythological associations should not surprise. It is meant to present Jewish traditions within a context familiar to the Greek mind. Thus, whatever connection the names Titans and Acheron suggest to Greek mythology is more superficial than real. While in both myths the titans rebel against God, in the Greek version the titans are themselves supernatural beings whose conflict with God has taken place before time, whereas in Sibylline Oracles 1:307-324 the titans are men who lived well into historical period after the Flood.

A case for a somewhat closer connection can be made for a text in book 2:227-232.[706] Here, at the end of the age, Uriel will open the steel gates of Hades and bring all out for judgement. This is a veiled reference to a general resurrection. The author focuses attention, in addition to all sinners, on the "phantoms, Titans and giants" whom the Flood destroyed and who will also come out of Hades.[707] The mention of giants being destroyed by the Flood follows closely on the Masoretic and the destruction of the Nephilim.[708] However, the mention of phantoms adds a touch of the supernatural in which case the Titans, presented here as distinct from the giants, might be a reference to angelic or supernatural beings. The myth that angels mated with human women before the Flood is fairly common in Second Temple Jewish literature and will be discussed shortly. The pericope in question in the Sibylline Oracles has been added or extensively redacted by a Christian insofar that in line 241 Christ is pictured as the judge of the world.

Finally, in Sibylline Oracles 3:110-161 the author relates the Greek myth of the Titanomachy. Three of the leading figures are mentioned by name – Kronos, Titan and Iapetus. Collins sees a euphemistic correspondance between these three titans and Sem, Ham and Japheth, the three sons of Noah.[709] This is plausible since the Oracles aim to present Jewish/Christian concepts in Greek terminology, though the association between the three Greek figures with the three sons of Noah is not obvious in the text itself.

A number of conclusions may be drawn from this overview of the relevant texts. Tartarus and the titans who in the Greek myth appeared in the same context, are present but not frequent in the Jewish literature. They were adopted from the Greek language. The *Titanomachy* forms a background in a couple of texts in the Sibylline Oracles and also possibly in Philo. Otherwise, the words have been divested of their original meaning and have been adopted by Jewish writers to define concepts not necessarily related to the Greek myth. Thus Tartarus can be simply a synonym for a large body of water, as is the case in the LXX, in the Sibylline Oracles 1:9-10, or Ps. Philo 60:3; it can be a synonym of Hades; or, in later writings, it can be the equivalent of Gehenna where in the day of judgement and after a resurrection of the dead, God will either have people in prolonged or eternal torment, or will destroy them and bury their corpses, so that Tartarus is simply a word to denote an eschatological grave. Likewise, the titans have been separated from their original role in Greek mythology and the word has become a near-synonym for "giant".

Tartarus and the Punishment of Fallen Angles in 2 Peter and Jude

In this section, I intend to make some exegetical observations on 2 Peter 2:4 with respect to what the author envisaged actually happened to the angels. I will also refer to Jude as the two epistles are closely related. There are three elements that make up 2 Peter 2:4: (a) God cast into Tartarus the angels that sinned; (b) they are in chains/pits of darkness; and (c) they are reserved for judgement. I intend to discuss the three elements in reverse order.

The phrase "reserved for judgement" translates εἰς κρίσιν τηρουμένους. The reference to judgement appears without the definitive article, which raises the question whether the author has in mind the day of judgement or some other judgement at a different time. The former option is to be preferred. In 2:9 the writer again mentions judgement without the article, this time in relation to the punishment of the false teachers. Evidently, the same event is anticipated in both cases. This becomes

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[705] Kurfess, 147-153.
[706] Globe, 51-58.
[707] On giants in Enoch literature, their relation to the fallen Watchers and their destruction, see Stuckenbruck, *Giants*, 38-40, 64-6, 83-4, 135-7, 159-60.
[708] On the Nephilim in Qumran literature, see Stuckenbruck, *Giants*, 109-12, 128-30, 149-50, 177-8.
[709] Collins, OTP 1:341.

clearer in 2:3 according to which the false teachers' condemnation and destruction[710] (both words have the article) will soon come. In chapter 3, the author returns to the theme and describes the judgement in greater detail. The coming destruction is compared to the Flood (3:5) and is directly linked to the parousia of Jesus (3:4,12). As in the gospels, it is to be accomplished through fire that completely destroys the wicked (3:7). The destruction of the angels is not specifically mentioned for the reason that the emphasis of the epistle is on the false teachers, those who follow them, and those who mock the faith of believers; the fallen angels are only briefly mentioned as a warning to the readers. The writer does, however, thrice state that the coming destruction will affect both heaven and earth (3:7,10,12) and his all encompassing language suggests that everything that has in any way been defiled, including the fallen angels, will be destroyed. The destruction will be complete. The elements will "melt with fervent heat" and everything will be "burned up" and "dissolve" (3:10,12).

In his depiction of the day of judgement, 2 Peter follows Jude. In Jude, the reference to judgement is likewise anarthrous but the writer makes it clear that he has the day of judgement in mind. He calls the judgement, the "great day" (vs. 6), and suggests that the punishment that befell Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of what will happen on that day. By doing this, Jude closely links the eventual fate of fallen angels with unrighteous humans, and, like 2 Peter assures that their punishment will be destruction, not torment of any sort.

The fallen angels are "reserved" for this coming judgement. The word τηρουμένους carries no negative connotation. The verb is used three more times in the epistle. In 2:17 "the deepest darkness" is "reserved" for the false teachers. It is not clear if it is present now in any sense, but it is stored awaiting the time when these persons will be judged. In 3:7 the heavens and earth are reserved for the judgement; at present they continue to exist and function as they have always had (3:4), but at some point in the future a dramatic change will come. More interesting is the use of the word in 2:9 – God "reserves" the wicked for the punishment of the day of judgement. The language closely parallels that of 2:4:

ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων...	εἰς κρίσιν	τηρουμένους (2:4)
ἀδίκους δὲ	εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως	τηρεῖν (2:9)

The wicked continue in their wickedness, oblivious to the fate that awaits them, but their judgement will surely come. The use of τηρέω in these different verses therefore seems to detach the coming judgement from the present situation placing an emphasis on the future; it will be at *that point* that everything will be set straight.[711] In this respect, whatever the state of the fallen angels at the moment, it is not their real punishment. This will come in the future, in the day of judgement.

This is verified by the syntax of 2 Peter 2:4. The last clause which reads παρέδωκεν εἰς κρίσιν τηρουμένους follows naturally on the last part of the first clause, οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλὰ in that both clauses are in the active voice – "God did not spare them... but delivered them..." The three words that stand in between these two clauses, σειραῖς ζόφου ταρταρώσας are parenthetical. In such a syntactical construction, the emphasis is on the last clause which declares the surety of the judgement that will befall the fallen angels, with the parenthetical clause in between serving as a secondary explanation about where there angels are at the moment.

In syntax Jude and 2 Peter are again in agreement. Jude gives emphasis to the day of judgement over the present state of the fallen angels in two ways. First, like in 2 Peter, the last word τετήρηκεν follows comfortably on the εἰς κρίσιν μεγάλης ἡμέρας with the description of the present fate of the angels serving as an explanatory, parenthetical phrase. Second, by placing the reference to the day of judgement before the description of their present state, Jude underlines that this is the

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[710] κρίμα and ἀπώλεια. The use of κρίμα rather than κρίσις suggests that at this point the author has in mind the condemnation that will come upon the false teachers more so than the act of judgement itself. The use of ἀπώλεια is reminiscent of the frequent use of this word in the Synoptic gospels.

[711] Τηρέω has neither a negative nor a positive connotation. It is a neutral term used here only of the wicked. For the righteous, the author prefers the verb φυλάσσω in a positive context. Thus God ἐφύλαξε ("saved") Noah from the destruction of the Flood (2:5), and the readers should φυλάσσεσθε ("keep" or "protect themselves") from the errors of falsehood (3:17). Unlike 2 Peter, Jude uses τηρέω both of the wicked being reserved for judgement, and also of the righteous being "reserved" or "kept" in the faith (vss. 1,21); and φυλάσσω only of the righteous (v.24).

punishment for their fall, with the present state being just an intermediary, temporary state in anticipation of what is to come. Thus, since the angels did not "reserve" (μὴ τηρήσαντας) their "own [proper] abode" God "reserved" (τετήρηκεν) them for the day of judgement. In light of the syntactical constructions of both 2 Peter and Jude that clearly place the emphasis in the day of judgement rather than the present state of the fallen angels, it seems that modern translations depicting the angels cast into hell, have missed the point. A more accurate translation of 2 Peter 2:4 would read: "For... God did not spare the angels who sinned but, having put them in Tartarus in chains of darkness, he delivered them to be reserved for judgement..."

With regard to the phrase "chains of deepest darkness" there is a textual issue with some manuscripts reading "storage pits" (σιροῖς) instead of "chains" (σειραῖς).[712] The former reading has strong support. The latter agrees with Jude 6 and is in line with the common apocalyptic depiction of fallen angels being bound and imprisoned.[713] It also usually thought to be thematically in line with the concept of angels bound and thrown into "hell" there to await the coming judgement.[714] In this respect σιροῖς would not fit the context since it is not tied in any sense to judgement – it is usually a reference to the underground pits where grain and other commodities where stored for later use. Kelly, however, is of the opinion that "storage pits" is more original.[715] The word is rare and therefore not a likely choice for a scribal adjustment. In contrast, it is easier to assume that σιροῖς was changed to σειραῖς to bring 2 Peter in line with Jude. With the evidence thus divided, it is not appropriate to draw definitive conclusions. I would like to point, however, that σιροῖς is not as out of context as is usually assumed. Indeed, in the light of the use of the verb τηρέω that we saw above, which draws attention away from the present and emphasizes the punishment of the day of judgement, then the use of a likewise neutral word to describe the waiting place of the fallen angels till the day of judgement should not surprise us; it helps to draw attention away from any notion of present suffering and focuses on what is to come.

With regard to Tartarus, we saw that in the relevant literature it takes a variety of meanings. What is the meaning here? We can begin to answer by a process of elimination. It cannot be the eschatological punishment as in Sibylline Oracles (2:303, 4:186) since it is specifically said to be a waiting place till that time. Neither can it be a synonym for the netherworld as in Sibylline Oracles (1:109-119) since in 2 Peter it is singled out as the place of fallen angels; no humans are there. On the same grounds, the Greek Tartarus, as a Hades below Hades, though it cannot be totally excluded, is likewise not a likely candidate since it ties the fate of the fallen angels in the present too closely to the fate of dead humans. Neither can Tartarus here be a synonym for the sea, as it seems to be in the LXX – it is difficult to picture angels bound up, or stored for judgement in the sea. Philo's use, which takes it as an unidentified, metaphorical prison for every negative concept might be a likely candidate, but it is difficult to see the author approaching his subject from the allegorising, philosophical approach of Philo.

The context might provide some clues. The author describes Tartarus by the use of the word "darkness" using the Greek ζόφος. In 2:17 the same word is used of the eventual fate of the ungodly. The use of the verb τηρέω in the same context suggests that this darkness is seen as already present at the moment, though it will only engulf the false teachers fully in the day of judgement. Since the fate of the wicked on that day will be their annihilation, the association of darkness and annihilation suggests that the false teachers will be completely and irrevocable shunned from the presence of God, a process that is already foreshadowed in the present. Thus, the writer does not hesitate to call this earth a "dark place" to which the "prophetic word" of God ("scripture") is a "light" (1:19).[716] Thus, the alienation from God that will become total for the false teachers in the day of judgement has already become a reality for the fallen angels.

The idea of fallen angels imprisoned on the earth or its atmosphere is common in contemporary literature. In Ephesians 2:2 Paul says that the air is the domain of Satan. In 2 Enoch 29:5 the seer describes how God hurled the devil and his angels out of "the height" and how they now fly "around the air, ceaselessly, above the Bottomless". In the Apocalypse of Elijah 1:1-2 this world is

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[712] σιροῖς - א, A, B, C, 81[vid], σειραῖς - K, L, P, p72, vg, syr.

[713] Eg. 1 En. 10:4, 12, 18:11, 21:7, 22:2, 88:1, 3, Jub. 5:10.

[714] Probably closest to the mark is Lenski's conclusion (*Epistles*, 310) that textual evidence favors σιροῖς while everything else favors σειραῖς.

[715] Kelly, 331.

[716] Here αὐχμηρῷ is used rather than ζόφος to describe the "darkness". Bauer, 124 defines the former as meaning "dry," "dirty," or "dark".

said to belong to the devil, while in the Apocalypse of Abraham 13:7-8 and 14:6, Azazel has chosen this earth as his dwelling place and God has permitted him to do so, albeit limiting his authority over the righteous. Even in the myth of the fall of the Watchers, they are imprisoned on this earth in a desert (BW 1 En. 10:4,12).[717] In the Testament of Solomon (e.g. 4:4,6; 17:2), demons are fallen angels who vie with good angels over the destiny of humans on earth. In this respect, the reading of Pseudo-Philo 60:3 is enlightening. When Saul is oppressed by an evil spirit, David sings to him to soothe him and in his song addressed the spirit: "And now do not be troublesome as one created on the second day.[718] But if not, remember Tartarus where you walk..."[719] Here, therefore, Tartarus is associated with the earth where the evil spirits dwell.

If indeed 2 Peter places the fallen angels on the earth, then he is in agreement with Jude. The latter places the temporal banishment of the angels as being "in eternal chains in the nether gloom". What this means Jude does not specify. As in 2 Peter, there is a further reference to darkness (ζόφος) in relation to the eventual fate of the false teachers. More importantly, he depicts a conflict between Michael and the devil over the body of Moses that implies that the devil is active on earth trying to thwart the purposes of God.

In summary, it appears that having sinned at some unspecified point in the past, the angels have been shunned from the presence of God and cast into Tartarus, on this earth, from which there is no escape. They are not pictured as suffering; this will come in the day of judgement, when they will receive their due reward for their rebellion.

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[717] The myth of the fall of Satan may have developed as a midrash on Is. 14:12-15 (and Ez. 28:17?).
[718] According to Ps. Philo 60:3, the evil spirits were created on the second day of creation.
[719] Harrington, OTP, 2:373.

Chapter XII

Luke 8:31

> "Jesus then asked him, 'What is your name?' He said, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back to the Abyss" (Luke 8:30-31).

The Abyss appears once in the gospels in Luke 8:31 in the context of the healing of a demoniac in Gerasa (Lk.8:26-39).[720] The story is also found in Matthew 8:28-34 and Mark 5:1-20. Mark and Luke mention only one demoniac while Matthew mentions two. On disembarking from a boat on the Sea of Galilee with his disciples, Jesus is met by a demon-possessed man. In the discussion that ensues it is revealed that the person is not possessed by one demon only but by a host numbering as many as a legion.[721] Jesus eventually casts out the demons that in turn compel a herd of swine to fall into the lake where they drown. The inhabitants of the town, fearful of the power of Jesus and upset for the loss of their animals, request that he depart from their country. Jesus complies. The relevance of this healing narrative lies in three of its elements. The first is to be found in 8:28 where the possessed man recognizes the true identity of Jesus and requests from him not to torment him. It is not clear if this request comes from the man himself or from the demons dwelling in him. If the request comes from the demons, does it suggest that they fear being sent to a place of suffering before the day of judgement? Or does it relate, as Gnilka

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[720] There is slight confusion as to where the healing was supposed to have taken place. Nestle-Aland prefer the reading "Gerasa" but there is textual support for "Gadara" and, to a lesser extend, "Gergesa". Matthew and Mark, show preference for "Gadara" over the other two. The reading "Gergesa" is usually considered to be due to the influence of Origen who, seeing that both Gerasa and Gadara were located some distance from the shore, suggested that there existed a town called Gergesa on the shore. Beyond the textual question stands the witness of archaeology. Gadara is believed to have been located about 5 miles from the lake, while Gerasa about 30 miles. Summers, 98, points out the towns are not mentioned by name in the gospels, but rather their inhabitants are designated as "Gadarenes," "Gerasenes". The incident therefore happened in the territory of the city in question, not necessarily just outside the city. Marshall, *Luke*, 336-7, notes that at least for Gadara, we know from Josephus (*Life*, 42), that its territory extended to the lake. Lohmeyer, 94, points out that Gadara's coins often depicted a boat. Despite this, Marshall prefers the reading "Gerasenes" on textual grounds and suggests that Gadara was a correction introduced possibly by Matthew. Cf. Guelich, *Mark*, 275-7.

[721] A legion numbered about 5,600 men (J. Green, 339). Bovon, 1:436, notes that demons, like angels, are arranged in military fashion and the name "Legion" indicates in this instance, a maximum of demonic concentrations. Bock, 774, wonders whether the comment that the demons number as many as there are men in a legion, represents their attempt to intimidate Jesus and stop him from challenging their authority. If so, it proves unsuccessful.

suggests, to some temporal bunishment[722] akin to the abyss of other Jewish texts examined above? The second element is in 8:31 where the demons call on Jesus not to send them to the Abyss. Is the Abyss the place where they would suffer? If not, why do they fear being sent there? The final element of interest is whether the fact that the swine, guided by the demons, end up in the sea, means that the demons themselves end up in the sea, which ironically might, after all, be the Abyss to which they dreaded to go. In the discussion below I will attempt to suggest answers to these questions.

The request not to torment

The first thing to note is the man's request that Jesus not torment him. The request comes from the lips of the man, as indeed the whole conversation since the demons speak through him. Is it, however, a request of the man himself or of the demons living within him? France is of the opinion that at least in the Markan version, the initial part of the dialogue that appears in the singular is "ostensibly with the man"[723] who, through his words, acknowledges his inferior position before Jesus.[724] Marshall suggests that it is of the demon.[725] Thompson concurs. The fear of torment, he suggests, "was part of the examination" in trial, "or of the punishment after sentence was passed," and thus denotes "the final inquisition and sentencing of evil, of which Jesus' action is now an anticipation".[726] I am inclined to say that the way each of the Synoptics has formulated the discussion suggests that the man, and not the demons, was in fear of torment.

In Mark the verbal exchange in this healing narrative is primarily between Jesus and the suffering man. The demons initially do not take part at all and only express themselves once towards the end. It is he who sees Jesus, he who runs, he who falls down at his feet, he who speaks.[727] Even when it is revealed that he is

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[722] Gnilka, 1:205. He cites Lk. 3:27.

[723] France, *Mark*, 229. The fact, of course, that the possessed man addresses Jesus as "Son of the Most High," and knows his name, indicates that the demons have somehow communicated this piece of information to the man before the encounter (cf. Schürmann, 1:483; J. Green, 338-9 who cites Acts 16:17 on the ability of demons to recognize the presence of Jesus or his disciples).

[724] Gnilka, 1:204.

[725] Marshall, *Luke*, 338. So also Bock, 772, and Pesch, *Markus*, 1:287, who goes as far as to say that the use of Jesus' name is intended to serve an apotropaic function. If so, it clearly fails. Guelich, *Mark*, 279, more corrently comments that it is simply a sign that the demoniac recognizes Jesus.

[726] G.H.P. Thompson, 139.

[727] Mk. 5:6-7 uses the following verbs (all singular to describe the man's activity: εἰδὼν, ἔδραμε, προσεκύνησεν, κράξας, λέγει, ὁρκίζω σε.

possessed by numerous rather than one demon, Mark maintains the singular when referring to the man – it is he who is talking, not the demons. In this context, it is worth contrasting the request not to torment with the request not to sent the demons away:

> "'I adjure you by God, do not torment *me*'" (Mk. 5:7).
>
> "He begged him earnestly not to send *them* out of the country" (Mk. 5:10).

In both instances it is the man speaking. In the first he voices a request for himself, in the second for the demons.[728] It is therefore the man who fears being tormented, but the demons who fear being cast out of the country.

Though he constructs the dialogue slightly differently, Luke agrees with Mark in that the two requests are concerned with the man and the demons respectively. Luke also closely follows Mark in the first part of the narrative and dialogue; it is the demoniac who sees Jesus and falls at his feet. As the two come face to face it is the man who speaks and requests that Jesus not torment him: "When *he* saw Jesus, *he* fell down before him and shouted... 'I beg you, do not torment *me*'" (Lk. 8:28). As the discussion develops and it becomes evident that the number of demons involved is large, Luke switches to the plural – it is now the demons who request that they not be sent to the Abyss but rather to the herd of swine: "*They* begged him, not to order *them* to go back into the Abyss" (Lk. 8:31). It seems therefore that while the second request concerning the Abyss certainly comes from the demons, the first request comes from the suffering man.

Matthew departs from Mark and Luke in an important detail in that he has two demon-possessed men rather than one, but agrees with them in that the request came from the men not the demons. Indeed, the way he has constructed this text suggests that he is deliberately trying to avoid the notion that Jesus came to torment the demons. Thus, upon seeing Jesus, the two possessed men cry to him, "'Have you come here to torment us before the time?'" (Mt. 8:29).[729] When the request that the

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[728] Cf. France, *Mark*, 229-30.

[729] Marshall, *Luke*, 339, suggests that Matthew's "before the time" relating to the torment indicates that the punishment of the day of judgement is meted out to the demons before the end of the world, and that Luke has included the name of the place (Abyss) where this will take place. For a different interpretation, see my discussion below. The meaning of the phrase "before the time" is difficult to pinpoint accurately. Most probably, Matthew intends to convey the idea that the demoniac did at some point expect to come face to face with God, possibly in the judgement but he feels that he might now fall into judgement earlier than he anticipated.

demons be sent to the herd of swine is voiced, Matthew clarifies that now it is not the two men who are speaking, but the demons: "The *demons* begged him…'" (Mt. 8:31).

It is evident, therefore, that though each of the Synoptics constructs the dialogue between Jesus and the suffering man/men and/or demons in a different way, all agree that it is the man/men who request(s) that Jesus not torment him/them, and it is the demons who request to be sent to the swine.

Fitzmyer[730] notes that neither Mark nor Luke (nor Matthew for that matter) specify what the torment would consist of. This is only partly correct. While Matthew is silent, Mark provides a hint, while Luke attempts to clarify this issue through redaction. In Mark we have the following initial sequence of events: first, Mark describes the man's miserable condition – he lived among tombs, was often tied with chains which he broke, and went around crying aloud and cutting himself with stones (Mk. 5:3-5); then he records the man's meeting with Jesus and his request that Jesus not torment him (Mk. 5:6).[731] The reason for the man's request is that Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to depart from the man (Mk. 5:7).[732] Apparently therefore, the man realised Jesus was more powerful than the demons and feared that now that Jesus was commanding the demons to depart from him, they would only do so by causing him much suffering. He is therefore requesting that if Jesus is proceeding to clear him of the demons, that he do so without causing him further anguish.

Luke is even clearer on this point. He does not describe the condition of the possessed man to begin with. Rather, he records his meeting with Jesus, followed by his request that Jesus not torment him (Lk. 8:28).[733] Luke agrees with Mark that the reason for the request was that Jesus was ordering the demons out (Lk. 8:29). He then proceeds without pause to describe the suffering man's miserable condition: "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me' – for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. *For many*

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[730] Fitzmyer, 738.

[731] Guelich, *Mark,* 277-8, is of the demoniac's behaviour exemplifies the characteristics of demonic possession as outlined in Is. 65:4-6 on which the Lukan description is a midrash (cf. Pesch, *Markus*, 1:285).

[732] This is evident in the Greek: ἔλεγε γὰρ αὐτῷ.

[733] Strauss, 426-7, found Luke's construction problematic since the man's troubled reaction was caused by an initial command to the demons to depart, while the actual departure does not happen until after the exchange between the Jesus and the demons/man. Strauss preferred Matthew's account where the actual command comes at the end of the exchange (Mt. 8:32). In this instance, Luke agrees with Mark (Mk. 5:8). For them Jesus commands the demons to depart at the very beginning of the encounter, but always the verbal exchange before the command is carried out in order to reveal the demons true hold over the man and prepare the way or the subsequest incident with the swine.

times it had seized him...". The fact that Luke chose to place the description of the suffering man immediately following the request that Jesus not torment him (which, in turn, is brought about by Jesus' command to the demons to depart), is important. Its introduction through the explanatory "for", suggests that this description plays an epexegetical role – the man feared that in their struggle against the power of Jesus, the demons would put him through even more misery than he had already experienced.[734]

Alternatively, the man may have feared that an encounter with the Most High God, or his Son, would result in his suffering. He might have anticipated such an encounter, possibly in the day of judgement, but now he sees Jesus and fears for his safety as he finds himself possessed by demons at enmity with Jesus. This suggestion is strengthened by the fact that he requests that *Jesus* should not torment him, rather than that Jesus should not allow the *demons* to torment him. At any rate, it would be wrong to conclude that the man feared some fiery torment of hell. The verb "torment" appears in the aorist – the man did not fear any ongoing torment, in Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss or anywhere else. His fear was rather that the encounter between Jesus and the demons, at that point in time and space, would bring suffering to him for as long as the two sides waged their spiritual war over him.

Bringing the above discussion together, it seems that the mention of torment in the context of the healing of the demon-possessed man, in which the Abyss appears, has nothing to do with the day of judgement or any possible torment in Hades. The request comes from the suffering man himself and for himself, rather than from the demons. It concerns his immediate well being as he realises the powerful demons that have been controlling his life have finally met one mightier than they and fears that this conflict between Jesus and the demons may result in even more misery for him.

The Abyss

The second question that calls for attention in this passage is the function of the Abyss. What is it and why do the demons dread being sent there? The healing of the demon-possessed man is said to have taken place in a locale overlooking the Sea of Galilee. As soon as the demons left the possessed man, they went to a herd of

[734] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 383, 385, recognizes that the fear of torment had to do with the immediate condition of the man who feared what the "tormenting spirits" would do to him. He also correctly notes the explanatory nature of "for" though he is of the opinion that the exorcism itself is the torment he feared. The close connection, however, between the request not to torment him, and the description of his condition while possessed, indicates that the man did not fear being liberated from the demons, but rather the effect of the struggle between Jesus and the demons on him.

swine and drove it into the lake where the pigs drowned. In light of the fact that in the LXX ἄβυσσος is almost always used of large bodies of water, could it be that the lake represents the "Abyss"? This suggestion has attracted affirmative comments. Fitzmyer wonders whether the lake, if not the Abyss itself, at least becomes a conduit to the Abyss.[735] Leaney likewise asserts that despite their plea, the demons are literally cast into the Abyss.[736] Bovon likewise maintains there is a reference to the sea since the demons, together with the swine, end up in the sea of Galille.[737] On a similar note, Conzelmann suggests that maybe the demons had come out of the lake before taking control of the man, and now simply return to their original habitation.[738] Hull concurs, arguing that water is a demon-destroying force.[739]

Such suggestions seem appealing given of the close connection between the Abyss and water in most relevant second-temple Jewish texts. Nonetheless, some strong objections cast doubt on them. The first and most obvious is that the demons in the healing narrative go to the swine on their own accord. In all three accounts, it is the demons that request to be sent to the herd of swine. Mark uses the word παρεκάλεσαν and Luke and Matthew concur – the demons pleaded with Jesus to be allowed to go to the pigs.[740] In all three accounts, as soon as the demons, go to the pigs the pigs rush to the sea.[741] One wonders whether the demons seeing that their defeat was imminent, attempt to cause Jesus harm by leading the pigs into the sea with a considerable loss of income to their owners and thus, possible embarrassment to Jesus.[742] Indeed, immediately after the healing of the demoniac and the drowning

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[735] Fitzmyer, 739.
[736] Leaney, 157.
[737] Bovon, 1:437.
[738] Conzelmann, 50.
[739] Hull, 100, cites two texts in support of his assertion: T. Sol. 5:11 and 11:6. T. Sol. is a rather late witness (ca. AD 200). This coupled with the fact that both texts come from the same work and that there is little in support in other contemporary literature strongly undermines his hypothesis. Also Luke clarifies that the demons feared *returning* to the Abyss. If they had come from there in the first place, the water clearly does not destroy them.
[740] Guelich, *Mark*, 283, notes an emphasis on the unclean – unclean spirits, unclean animals (swine), unclean (Gentile) land. In this respect he sees the rowning of the pigs as an act of cleansing the land (cf. Gnilka, 1:207).
[741] Some have felt uncomfortable that Jesus would be responsible for such destruction of property (e.g. Strauss, 430). We need to note however that (a) it is the demons that cause the destruction, (b) pigs were considered unclean and should therefore not have been herded, and (c) the incident, while ostensibly barred Jesus from further ministry in the region, created such a stir of interest that God's name was glorified (Mk. 5:14-17,20; Lk. 8:39). Indeed, Bock, 777, points to the threefold use of ἀπαγγέλω to underline the stir Jesus'ministry caused.
[742] Bauernfeind, 34-56, actually goes as far as to say that the demons deceive Jesus by causing the loss thus bringing Jesus into disfavour with the herdsmen and the owners. Jesus eventually wins, because, though forced to go, he leaves a witness behind. The idea of Jesus being deceived is not obvious in the

of the pigs, the inhabitants of the town come out to Jesus and request that he depart from their area.[743] Mark emphatically states that they ask Jesus to depart after they have heard of the healing of the man *and of what happened to the pigs* (Mk. 5:16). Likewise, Matthew records that the keepers of the herd went and told to the inhabitants of the town "everything, *and* what had happened to the demoniacs" (Mt. 8:33), where the emphasis is obviously on the "everything" (including the drowning of the pigs), and where the healing of the demoniacs come into their report almost as an afterthought.[744] Luke is more ambiguous. He has the keepers of the herd report primarily about the healing and only secondarily about the herd. Likewise, when the people of the town come to Jesus, they become afraid because they see the healed man rather than because of the loss of the pigs. Nonetheless, the loss certainly looms in the background and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the destruction of the pigs followed by the request for the departure of Jesus represents the demons' best efforts to subvert the work of Jesus. In the light of the eagerness with which the demons drive the herd to the water, it is hard to see how the lake can be the Abyss to which they dreaded to be sent. If at all present, the association Abyss-lake forms at best a background with the focus being elsewhere.

What then is the Abyss? Bock is of the opinion that perhaps the Abyss is a parallel expression to Hades, Gehenna and Tartarus.[745] However, an association with Hades and Gehenna is unlikely. The Abyss pertains only to demonic forces in Scripture while Hades and Gehenna are used in relation to humans. And while the Abyss is seen as a place currently in existence, Gehenna is a reference to the punishment of the day of judgement.

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present form of the gospels, and as such Bauernfeind's suggestion remains conjectural. On the other hand, the suggestion that Jesus leaves because his mission has been accomplished (see, for example, Guelich, *Mark*, 284) seems stretched, for according to the narration, he had just landed in the area. Nonetheless, his mission is definitely successful (if not complete) because he leaves behind the healed man with the instruction that he witness to "his people". Gnilka, 1:206, sees the people to be witnessed to as consisting only of the family of the healed man; Pesch, *Markus*, 1:294, more correctly, extends it to include his Genitle milieu, though, perhaps, he goes too far when he sees this as the beginning of Gentile missions.

[743] The fear in question is not reverential "fear of God," but rather a fear of the supernatural (Schürmann, 1:486) that does not lead to faith (Bovon, 1:440; J. Green, 341).

[744] Matthew places emphasis that the destruction of the herd as the main cause of disaffection for the people of Gadara. Thus, where Mark and Luke record that the towns-people came out and saw the healed demoniac and were filled with fear, Matthew instead reports that when they saw "him" (Mt. 8:34) they asked that he leave. The "him" is obviously a reference to Jesus rather than the healed demoniac since according to Matthew there were two demoniacs.

[745] Bock, 775.

An insight as to what the Abyss represents can be gained by looking at other texts in Luke that concern the whereabouts of demons. Luke 11:24-26 is probably the most characteristic:

> "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first."[746]

Two things are important here. The first is the relationship between the evil spirit and the dry places. This is a recurring motif both in the gospels and in other contemporary literature.[747] In the healing of the demoniac the spirits were driving the person to the cemetery, to the mountains and to deserted places.[748] In the accounts of the temptation of Jesus, the Holy Spirit leads him to the desert to confront the devil.[749] It has been suggested that the desert and the sea were viewed as the domain of the devil and his hosts since these two areas were considered symbols of the primeval chaos.[750]

The second thing from Luke 11:24-26 worth noting is that the demon finds no rest in the desert; rather its place of comfort is to be with humans, to torture and bother them.[751] Thus, when the spirit finds no rest in the desert, it not only returns to the person it originally possessed, but brings with it seven other spirits "more wicked" than itself to cause more suffering. The suffering demons were believed to bring is evident in a number of other healing narratives in the Synoptic gospels. The most dramatic is the one discussed above (Mk. 5:1-20, Mt. 8:28-34, Lk. 8:26-39). In other healing accounts of possessed persons, we read that the demons caused someone to be blind, deaf, or deaf and dumb.[752] In one instance a demon attempts to kill its victim

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[746] Hull, 102, thinks Luke intends this text to be understood literally of persons possessed with evil spirits, in contrast to the same text in Matthew where, as Marshall, *Luke*, 479, points out, it is intended to be understood parabolically, or at least in broader terms, since Matthew applies it to "this evil generation".

[747] E.g. Is. 13:21; Bar. 4:35, Rev. 18:2.

[748] Lk. 8:27, 29, Mk. 5:5.

[749] This is clear in Mt. 4:1 where the Spirit leads Jesus to the desert for the express purpose of the confrontation. In Mark 1:13 it is not clear if this is the express purpose of the trip to the desert. Nonetheless, it is there that Jesus is confronted by the full might of the devil's power.

[750] Ellis, *Luke*, 128.

[751] J. Green, 459.

[752] Mt. 9:32-33; 12:22;Mk. 9:24; Lk. 11:14.

by throwing him sometimes in the fire sometimes in water.[753] It thus comes as no surprise that though the habitation of demons is usually some deserted place, the demons prefer to live among the people and bring them suffering. In one of his visions, the seer John envisions Satan as having set up his throne in the city of Pergamum;[754] in another part of the same vision Satan is said to have established his own synagogue within Smyrna.[755] In some respect, Satan has some authority over humanity as a whole. All three Synopticists record an incident when, in reply to an accusation that he delivers possessed people through the power of Beelzebub, Jesus explains that his victories against the demons can only come through the power of God who has sent him to defeat the strong adversary (Beelzebub). In all the three parallel versions the mission of Jesus is thus seen specifically as a mission to bind the devil and liberate his captives.[756] In a similar motif in Revelation 20:1-3, the binding of the devil is completed when he is thrown to the Abyss where he is completely powerless to harm or lead humanity astray.[757]

These insights into the activities of demons help clarify the request of the demons not to be sent to the Abyss. So does Luke's source behind the request of the demons, Mark 5:10. While in Luke 8:31 the demons request not to be sent to the Abyss, in Mark they request not to be sent "out of the country".[758] The idea of sending a defeated demon away from the area of his activity is fairly common in other accounts of healings in the Greek papyri, but does not usually come as a

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[753] Mt. 17:15, Mk. 9:22; cf. Lk. 9:39. In Mk. 9:22 the demon tries to ἀπολέσῃ ("destroy," "kill") the suffering child; compare with Mk. 1:24, where the same word is used by the suffering man, rather than the demon, when he asks Jesus whether he has come to destroy (ἀπολέσα). It seems that the suffering person in this instance feared that the wrath of the demon in the presence of Jesus would be such that it would lead to his death. In Lk. 8:29 the victim fears that his encounter with Jesus may lead the demons to torment him even more, rather than kill him. The demons thus appear to enjoy tormenting, even killing their victims.

[754] Rev. 2:12-17.

[755] Rev. 2:9.

[756] Mk. 3:22-27; Mt. 12:24-29; Lk. 11:15-26. Luke alone ties this incident to the statement about the demon going to dry places only to return with seven other demons worse than itself. In combining the two sayings, Luke implies that the coming of Jesus can liberate from the control of evil spirits by limiting their power to harm and sending them away from the people they oppress. However, there is always the danger that demons will return if the "house remains empty", i.e. if the once-suffering person does not chose a new master – Jesus.

[757] Though the binding here is complete, it is not final, as the devil is given one last chance to deceive the nations, which he does successfully before he and they are destroyed (20:7-10).

[758] ἔξω τῆς χώρας. According to Bauer, 889, χώρα can also mean dry land. This has led Pimentel, to see a possible parallel with Luke's ἄβυσσος as both denoting the waters of the lake as opposed to the dry land. The suggestion fails to convince on linguistic grounds. It is hardly good syntax to send someone or something "out of the dry land".

concession.[759] Pesch gives a name to such a process. He notes that as in the Synoptic account of the healing of the demoniac(s), in the magical papyri there is often the healing itself that he calls "apopompe" and then the command to the demon to depart to another area, the "epipompe".[760]

The locale to which a demon is sent varies from account to account. Often it is the desert or the sea, or some subterranean region; sometimes it can be animals or even inanimate objects; at other times it can be a distant place or a foreign country; it can even be another person, usually an enemy of the healed.[761] Herter aptly sums up the reason for the epipompe. The idea is that expelled demons are being sent "where they could harm no one".[762] The epipompe therefore that the demons are trying to avoid in Mark is being sent out of the country; out of the place they are familiar with, away from the people to whom they have taken pleasure to cause much harm.[763] The demons fear confinement.[764] They recognise that if Jesus sends them away, he is in essence limiting their power to cause harm and thus stopping them from the one thing they excel in doing.

The parallels discussed above, raise the question whether the same idea lies behind the fear of the demons being sent into the Abyss in Luke 8:31. The difference between Mark's "out of the country" and Luke's "Abyss" does not underline a difference in their conception of the work and habitation of demons. In both instances, the demons fear an epipompe that will drastically limit their power. The difference is that Mark gives some leverage to the demons; once they are sent out of the country, they can still be liable to cause some harm albeit in an area where other demons might be in control, in a place where they are strangers. In contrast, Luke seems to want to emphasize the ability of Jesus to bind the power of the demons conclusively. The threat is that he will not simply send them to another country, but rather to the Abyss – to a deserted, uninhabited place, where, in line with Luke 11:24-26, they will unsuccessfully seek to find rest. Their powers have been rendered

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[759] Pesch, *Markus*, 1:290.
[760] Pesch, "Markan, 356.
[761] Thraede, 52. In Tob. 8:3 the demon Asmodeus is driven to Upper Egypt.
[762] Herter, 112-143. The quote is taken from 116.
[763] France, *Mark*, 230, questions the notion of demons being in charge o geographical areas, though he admits, Tob. 8:3 suggests so. He is of the opinion the "out of the country" should be understood as referring to a remote area rather than a different "country".
[764] Bock, 775.

ineffective. Their only escape will be if the person(s) from whom they have been expelled, will allow them to return.

Conclusion on Luke 8:31 and Part III

By way of summary, we may conclude that the Abyss in Luke 8:31 is not the equivalent of Gehenna, the place of punishment on the day of judgement that somehow has been brought forward in time. Neither Luke nor the Synoptic parallels suggest this. Moreover, the Abyss is not used in such a context in the contemporary literature with the exception of two passages in AA (1 Enoch 88, 90) examined earlier, which bear no resemblance to the depiction here. Neither is the Abyss a parallel to Hades, the temporary, silent abode of the dead. The literary support for such a connection in other Jewish writings or in the New Testament is weak, as we have seen, and, at any rate, Luke 8:31 does not concern itself in any way with the dead. Hades is a place for the human dead whereas the Abyss here is the possible temporary destination for the living demons. Instead there is an evident parallel with the Abyss of Revelation albeit in a non-apocalyptic context. Thus the release in Revelation 9:1-11 of evil forces from the Abyss that leads to great harm to humanity is paralleled in Luke 8:26-39 by the demons wanting to remain "outside" the Abyss, and among the humans whom they cause to suffer. Likewise, the picture of the devil being bound and thrown into the Abyss (Rev. 20), so as not to deceive, is paralleled in a less apocalyptic and more temporal way in Luke's language of the binding the devil and his forces in 11:24-26 and in the demons being "imprisoned" in the Abyss they dread to go in Luke 8:31. The Lukan Abyss also has a vague point of contact with BW 1 Enoch 21:7 where an Abyss serves as the place of temporary punishment of the fallen Watchers. However, the differences are more prominent and preclude any direct literary relationship. Thus, while in BW the Watchers remain in the Abyss till the day of judgement, in the Abyss of Luke there seems to be a movement in and out. While the Abyss in BW is the abode of the Watchers who took human women, in Luke it appears to be for all demonic forces. While in BW it appears to be a place of suffering and torment with, among other things, a fire, in Luke whatever suffering is limited to the inability of demons to bother people.

Abyss does have a close relationship with Tartarus. In neither are humans involved; both relate to fallen angels only. Neither is a place of torment in the sense that the word "hell" is understood to imply. There is no fire, no destruction. The negative concepts associated with these two terms, have to do with the fact that in

Tartarus the fallen angels are completely detached from the presence of God and his light, while in the Abyss from the fact that their power over human beings is limited.

Yet, the two are not identical with one another. Tartarus is a general term that relates to the fall of evil angels on earth. As such, it should be consistent with the saying of Jesus in Mark 3:22-27, Matthew 12:24-29 and Luke 11:15-26 that "the strong man" (devil) has some sovereignty over this earth, though Jesus is stronger than him and will defeat him. The Abyss at times does seem to be a reference to this earth (Rev. 20:3 discussed earlier), but as used in Luke 8:31, it emphasizes the authority and lack of it by the devil and his angels to bring suffering to humans; while in the Abyss their power is limited, but once out of it, they try to cause havoc in human affairs, though even then their sway is not complete.

Part IV

Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth

Chapter XIII – Background

So far we have examined the use of the nouns Gehenna, Hades, Abyss and Tartarus as they relate to concepts of afterlife in the Synoptic gospels. Beyond these one more place of punishment figures with some prominence in the Synoptics, namely, the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth.

The combination of the elements of weeping and of gnashing of teeth does not appear elsewhere in the New Testament, or among any of the near contemporary biblical and extra-biblical Jewish writings. This in itself should warn against any hasty conclusion that this phrase was a common, or even standard, Jewish description for hell.[765] Separated, weeping is a common description of the feelings of the wicked in the day of judgement; the gnashing of teeth is, in contrast, rare, but there are some texts that shed light on the possible meaning of the phrase as it appears in the gospels.

It is absent from Mark, but appears once in Luke and six times in Matthew with whom, especially among the parables, it is a favourite expression. In Luke, it appears in 13:28 as a conclusion to the parable of the Narrow Door (13:22-30). It is a Q text[766] that corresponds to Matthew 8:12, though in contrast to Luke's parable setting, in Matthew the saying is placed at the end of the incident of the healing of the centurion's servant (Mt. 8:5-13). Beyond this, Matthew has the saying appended to no less than five parables. Of these two are unique to Matthew,[767] two are shared with Luke,[768] and one is shared with Luke but is provided with an ending unique to Matthew.[769] It seems, therefore, that the saying became, at least for Matthew, a standard formula that he does not hesitate to use in a variety of settings even if it is not in his sources. This is all the more surprising in the light of its absence in all contemporary literature with the single exception of Luke 13:28.

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[765] France, *Matthew*, 156.
[766] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 91.
[767] Mt. 13:24-30 and 37-43, the parable of The Tares, and 13:47-50 the parable of the Net.
[768] Mt. 24:45-51 and Lk. 12:42-48, the parable of the Faithful Servant, and Mt. 25:14-30 and Lk. 19:11-27, the parable of the Talents.
[769] Mt. 22:1-14 and Lk. 14:16-24, the parable of the Great Supper where Matthew includes the incident of the man without a wedding garment.

In light of the above, this Part will cover both the background of the saying and its present function in the gospels. First, I will briefly consider references to weeping in relation to judgement in the early Jewish literature, and, more importantly, texts that might illuminate the more elusive "gnashing of teeth". In this way, we can detect possible sources for the gospel saying and also indications of its meaning. Second, I will look at each of the Synoptic texts in their context and attempt to determine its implications for forming a picture of a Synoptic understanding of eschatological judgement.

"Weeping" is a common concept in Jewish literature so I will limit my study here to a brief survey of some characteristic texts containing the substantive κλαυθμός we meet in the gospels. Κλαυθμός is associated with a number of different situations. Sometimes the term expresses a strong surge of emotion both joy and sadness. In Genesis 45:2 and 46:29 Joseph weeps when he meets his bothers in the first instance and his father, in the second, after many years of separation. The meeting is especially charged since it was unexpected and involves a dramatic reversal of roles. Joseph, who was sold by his brothers to slave traders, now sees them as they have humbly come to ask for provisions from him who has now become second to Pharaoh. Likewise, the meeting with the father with whom Joseph was a favourite is one that Joseph would not have expected, and the κλαυθμός in this instance represents the outburst of all the emotion at the restoration of a relationship lost for many years. In Jeremiah 31:9 the noun is used again in a likewise dramatic moment when in prophecy the seer announces that the exiles of Israel will return to their land weeping with joy.

By contrast, κλαυθμός can also express great distress. In Psalm 6:8 the psalmist praises God who has heard the voice of his cries. This verse is particularly interesting for it is introduced with the phrase "depart from me, all you workers of evil" – the very phrase that the parable of the Narrow Door places on Jesus' lips as he commands the unworthy to depart to where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. I will return to this phrase when examining Luke 13:28. Suffice it to note that while in Luke the rejected ones experience the "weeping", here it is the psalmist who weeps as he declares that God has finally heard him. There is therefore a clear contrast in the situation envisaged.

Most commonly κλαυθμός is an expression of sorrow. In Judges 21:2, the warriors of the eleven tribes cry after they have defeated Benjamin, realizing that one of their kin tribes has been just about annihilated. In 2 Samuel 13:36 the sons of David cry for the death of their brother Amnon at the hands of Absalom's servants. In Ezra 3:13 there is an emotional juxtaposition. At the foundation ceremony of the second temple, a cry of joy is mingled with a cry of sorrow. The reason for the former is that the temple has begun to be rebuilt. The latter comes from those of older age who had seen the glory of the temple of Solomon, in comparison to which the new edifice looks unimposing. Thus, κλαυθμός is the exact opposite of rejoicing (εὐφροσύνη). It is no surprise then that according to Isaiah 65:19 there will be no more "weeping" when God makes things new.

Often, κλαυθμός is intended to express sorrow for sin. In Joel 2:12 the prophet summons Judah to return to God in repentance manifested in "weeping and mourning".[770] A similar call is found in Isaiah 22:12, but instead of weeping the prophet sees joy. In Malachi 2:12-13 there is a warning that the time has come when though the people cry in the temple, God will not hear them. This is in contradiction to the request at the dedication of the temple that when the people cry out to God from the temple, he should hear.[771] The notion here therefore is that the sins of the people have increased to such an extent that God has turned his back completely.

Finally, it is worth noting that weeping is at times associated with divine acts of judgement. In Isaiah 15:3 onlookers will see the destruction of Moab and cry over it, while in 16:9 God himself will cry for what he is about to do to Moab. In Jeremiah 3:21 the inhabitants of Jerusalem cry because they have forgotten God and his presence has departed.

In contrast to "weeping", the gnashing of teeth is rare in the relevant extant literature. The Greek noun translated "gnashing" is βρυγμός and the verb is βρύχω. Noun and verb occur a total of nine times. We will briefly consider these texts, devoting special attention to two instances in the Psalms.

In all relevant texts, there is close association between gnashing and anger. In Proverbs 19:12 for example, the anger of the king is compared to the roaring (βρυγμός) of a lion while his favour is like the dew of the grass. The former is

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[770] κλαυθμῷ... κοπετῷ.

[771] 1 Kgs. 8:31,33,35,37; 9:3.

something that causes fear, the latter something that refreshes and cools. This text is the only instance where βρυγμός is used without reference to "teeth".

In Sirach 51:3 the writer praises God for deliverance from "gnashing [teeth] waiting to devour". While anger is not mentioned here specifically, envisaged is a situation where the well being of the writer was in danger because of the evil surmising of wicked persons.

In Job 16:9 Job laments his present condition and complains that his friends who came to comfort him have not only failed to do so but have made his misery worse. This text is unique in that it is the only instance in which God gnashes his teeth. In the poetic language of this passage, Job feels as if God has become angry with him delivering him into the hands of unworthy persons (16:11).[772]

The next occurrence is in Psalm 35, a song requesting deliverance from the oppression of the wicked. In 35:11-16 the psalmist relates how the wicked not only mocked him and rejoiced in his suffering, but also repaid him with evil for his good. He concludes his complaint with the words: "they sneered at me most contemptuously; they gnashed their teeth upon me". The gnashing here includes a combination of anger and hatred towards the writer, and an attitude of contempt.

In Psalm 37 we meet a similar pattern but in a more relevant context. As such, we will examine this text more closely. Peter Craigie notes that the theme of the psalm is retribution and recompense,[773] so that the song dwells at length on the fate of the wicked person. He will "wither as the grass" (37:1), will be destroyed (37:9, 20, 28),[774] and the time will come when he will not be found anymore (37:10). All these will happen when "his day" comes (37:13). In contrast, the righteous will inherit the earth (37:29). It is not clear if in its original context the Psalm was to be understood in purely temporal terms or whether a reward/punishment in the future was envisaged. A. Weiser, in line with a majority of scholars who question whether the ancient Hebrews had a developed concept of reward and punishment in a future day of judgement, indeed of an afterlife of any type, suggests that only temporal rewards and

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[772] The RSV for 9 reads: "He has torn me in his wrath and hated me; he has gnashed his teeth at me". The Greek of the LXX is softer: "In anger he has oppressed me, he has gnashed his teeth at me". Perhaps the translators felt uncomfortable with such strong language used for God and attempted to dampen the impact.

[773] Craigie, 297.

[774] The Greek employs both the word ἀπολούνται (37:9,20), which we have come across in the gospels in relation to Gehenna and discussed in the relevant section, and the stronger ἐξολοθρευθήσονται (37:28). Both imply complete destruction (See Liddell and Scott, 207, 597 and the relevant discussion on "Gehenna").

punishments are in view here.[775] Dahood, on the other hand, who tends to see in many psalms a reference to a future life, sees in the phrase "his day will come" the judgement that will come after the temporal life is over.[776]

It is beyond the confines of this study to wade into such a broad issue as the presence or not of a belief in an afterlife in the different strata of Old Testament traditions. More important is that language as described above came to be understood eschatologically by the time the LXX translations were made during the last three centuries before the Common Era. Indeed, in Matthew 5:5 we have direct evidence that at least part of the Psalm had come to be interpreted by the first century AD (at least by Christians) as applying to the world to come. Matthew 5:5 reads: μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοί κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν. This in turn, is a direct quotation of Psalm 37:11: οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσι γῆν.

The quotation from Psalm 37:11 in Matthew 5:5 constitutes one of the nine beatitudes of which at least some clearly envision a heavenly reward.[777] It is plausible, therefore, that in Psalm 37 the early church found a representation not merely of the temporal, but of the eschatological destiny of the godly and ungodly. Likewise, the Qumran community read Psalm 37 eschatologically. In 4Q 171 the godly and ungodly of Psalm 37 are made to represent the Qumran community, on the one hand, and Jewish leaders who opposed the community, on the other.[778] The punishment of the latter is invariably presented as their deliverance into the hands of the Gentiles (commentary on 37:12 and 13), or as destruction in the final showdown between good and evil expected within a generation of the death of the Teacher of Righteousness (commentary on 37:8-9, 10, 11). We may conclude, therefore, that irrespective of how the psalm was initially understood, at the turn of the era it was being interpreted eschatologically by at least some religious writers.

The reference to the gnashing of teeth in Psalm 37:12 occurs in such a context: "The sinner will watch for the righteous and gnash his teeth upon him. But the Lord shall laugh at him; for he foresees that his day will come." The picture here, as in Psalm 35, is of the wicked gnashing their teeth in anger and hatred at the faithful of God. This is more obvious in the Hebrew text, which behind the somewhat neutral

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[775] Weiser, 315, 318-9.
[776] Dahood, 1:228.
[777] Mt. 5:3,8,10. Mt. 5:12 concludes the beatitudes reads: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven..."
[778] See 4Q171 and the comments by Wise, Abegg and Cook, 221.

παρατηρήσεται[779] has the verb זמם, which carries the idea of watching "with an evil intent".[780] It is also evident in the Greek by the verses preceding and following 37:12. In 37:8, the faithful are warned to cease from all forms of anger[781] towards the wicked, in contrast to the latter who are full of anger at the former. This anger is not only a feeling, but manifests itself in oppressive behaviour in 37:14.

Psalm 37, therefore, presents the judgement of the wicked, perhaps initially in a temporal context. But as the idea of a judgement in an eschatological future became more prominent, it was regarded as anticipated in the text. Against this background, the wicked are pictured gnashing their teeth in anger against the righteous but, unbeknown to them, they are about to be visited by destruction.

An even closer parallel to the "gnashing of teeth" texts in the gospels occurs in Psalm 112:10. In contrast to Psalm 37, which emphasizes the coming judgement, the central theme here is the reward of the upright person. To the one who follows the commands of the Lord, his righteousness will remain forever (112:3). His name will be remembered fondly (112:6), and he will live to see the punishment of his enemies (112:8). Then, "the sinner shall see and be angry, he shall gnash his teeth and waste away; the desire of the sinner shall perish" (112:10). Again in the Hebrew of this Psalm, Dahood sees a future setting after a resurrection. He suggests that the word חשך which is used in 112:4 to describe the darkness from which the upright will be set free, is not common darkness, but the darkness of death.[782] Indeed, the notion of the righteous living to see the complete destruction of their enemies seems the push the boundaries of this psalm forward, and express a hope in a future, permanent restitution.

The LXX hints in a similar direction by the repeated use of the adjective αἰώνιος for the upright person and his legacy:

εἰς αἰῶνα αἰῶνος - his righteousness will remain forever (112:3)

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[779] The Greek παρατηρήσεται means "to watch closely" and carries no negative connotation (see Liddell and Scott, 1327).

[780] Koehler and Baumgartner, 273, render זמם as "to whisper," "to plan," "to intend" "to plan evil".

[781] Greek, παῦσαι ἀπὸ ὀργῆς καὶ ἐγκατάλιπε θυμὸν. In the same verse the psalmist warns with the words μὴ παραζήλου, do not envy or "try to emulate" (Liddell and Scott, 1309) the ungodly. Obviously, the anger from which the ungodly manifest is the very thing that the upright should avoid by not emulating their attitude.

[782] Dahood, 3:127. Dahood compares the use of the noun here with Ps. 35:6 and 139:11-12 where it also denotes death. He also sees a parallel with Ps. 1:3-6, which also promises immortality to those who observe the Torah.

εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα οὐ σαλευθήσεται - he will never be moved (112:6)

εἰς μνημόσυνον αἰώνιον - he will be a permanent reminder (112:6)

εἰς αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος - his righteousness will remain forever (112:9)

Of the above four instances, the first, third and fourth render the Hebrew עלם, while the second seems to be a gloss added by the translator. The rendering of עלם by the double use of αἰών (αἰῶνα αἰῶνος) in the first and fourth instances seems to be an attempt to give an added emphasis on the otherworldly dimension of the promises and warnings contained in this psalm. Therefore, while it is true that the adjective αἰώνιος was used in purely temporal settings, its repeated use even when not called for by the text, and the strengthened emphasis added through the hand of the translator suggest that the psalm came to be understood as expressing confidence that Yahweh would bring justice to bear in a more special way, in future judgement.

The gnashing of teeth in this Psalm is again an activity of the wicked towards the upright. In this instance, the wicked gnashes his teeth in anger when *seeing* the blessings of the good person. Why are the wicked angry? Because of envy on the rich blessings bestowed on the righteous.[783] This envious anger, however, will not last long. Though they gnash their teeth, sinners will "waste away" and perish (112:10).

Psalm 112:10 is important because it combines a number of elements that recur in the gospels – a person/persons richly blessed by God due to his unyielding obedience, and a person/persons losing out on these blessings sees blessings bestowed on others and, in turn, is filled with anger and envy to the extent that his teeth gnash. Yet this anger is of no avail, neither does it lead to repentance or changed behaviour. Rather, it is the precursor of an even sadder fate since the sinner not only misses out on the rewards but also loses his life. This picture of the wicked ones gnashing their teeth but dying while the righteous prosper reflects a hope not only in an immediate settling of injustices but rather in a grander and more final reckoning in the future.

In addition to the above texts, there are two more instances where βρυγμός occurs in Christian texts outside the gospels. The first is Acts 7:54 where Luke relates the witness of Stephen before the Sanhedrin. Stephen outlines the history of Israel in

[783] Cf. Gen. 30:1; 37:11; Pr. 3:31; 4:14; 23:17; Sir. 45:18.

a way that exposes the Jewish leadership for their failings (7:2-53).[784] According to Luke, the members of the Sanhedrin listened in fury, hoping he would say something for which to condemn him: "Now when they heard these things they were enraged and they ground [gnashed - ἔβρυχον] their teeth against him..." (Acts 7:54). Eventually, they found the excuse they wanted when Stephen claimed to behold the throne of God (7:56). Dragging him out of the city, they stoned him till he died (7:59). The use of βρυγμός here conforms to the pattern we have met so far – anger directed at an upright person. This text is especially important because it is written by the author of the gospel of Luke. As such, the use of the word here could have implications on its use in Luke 13:28.

Finally, Testament of Jacob 5:9 reads: "And as to all these sinners, their punishment is the fire which will not be extinguished, and the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth". The phrases "the fire which will not be extinguished," "outer darkness" and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" show clear gospel influence. The first recalls the language of Mark 9:43 which has already been discussed at length, while the other two reflect Matthew's "weeping and gnashing" texts which will be discussed below. Testament of Jacob, together with Testaments of Abraham and Isaac, constitutes the Testaments of the Three Patriarchs. That of Abraham has been preserved in Christian circles but is likely built on a core of Jewish material. By contrast, the Testaments of Isaac and Jacob are essentially Christian works. Testament of Jacob has been dated to the second or third centuries.[785] The late date of the above verse is evident from the way in which the author uses three different phrases from specific contexts in the gospels as parallel and uniform expressions of hell. As such, it is of little relevance to the discussion of the Synoptic material and only witnesses to one trend of understanding such phrases within Christian circles.

In summary, we may draw several conclusions. Κλαυθμός is a common word used to express strong emotions, which can include joy, but usually refers to intense sorrow. At times it is used in conjunction with acts of judgement, as was the case with Moab. Βρυγμός is less frequent but its use is consistent. In every case it is

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[784] Schwartz, 410, notes that Stephen was particularly public in his ministry in contrast to other leaders. As such, he likely had already incurred the wrath of the Sanhedrin before his appearance before it and their gnashing of teeth was doubly an expression of anger.
[785] Stinespring and E.P. Sanders in OTP, 2:869, 913.

associated with anger and in all but one, the word "teeth" is either mentioned in relation to βρυγμός or its presence is implied. Of particular interest is Acts 7:54 since it comes from the author of Luke and as such can serve as an aid in understanding βρυγμός in Luke. The same holds true for the two texts from Psalms 37 and 112. Both psalms pronounce blessings and judgement that lead to destruction on different classes of people and both came to be understood eschatologically by the turn of the Common Era. Plausibly, therefore, they influenced the gospel writers in their use of the phrase in an eschatological setting. Below, we will see that especially with Luke 13:28, this is certainly the case.

Chapter XIV

Luke 13:28

> "There you will weep and gnash your teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out."

The first Synoptic text we consider is Luke 13:28. The saying comes from Q[786] and corresponds to Matthew 8:12 though it appears in a different context in the two gospels. In Luke, it is part of the parable about the narrow gate. Those who enter through it will enter the great banquet of the kingdom of God. Those who fail to enter now will discover that when they try to in the future, the master will have closed the door and they will be left outside where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The ones left out represent Jews who have failed to believe in Jesus. In contrast, many will come and enter the kingdom from the east and the west.[787] The parable as it stands is unique to Luke, though Matthew has the saying about the narrow gate as an independent logion (Mt. 7:13), and the picture of the closed door resembles Matthew's conclusion of the parable of the Ten Virgins (Mt. 25:10-12).[788]

Opinions are divided concerning whether Luke 13:28 or Matthew 8:12 retains the more authentic reading. Matthew is usually given preference. H. Marshall in contrast points out that Luke contains the present participial clause ὑμᾶς δὲ ἐκβαλλομένους ἔξω, which is awkward in Greek and suggests an Aramaic circumstantial clause behind it, which in turn may be evidence that Luke retained an early form of the saying.[789]

The parable of the Narrow Door is told within the context of Jesus going towards Jerusalem (13:22). The death of Jesus is clearly anticipated. When, following the parable, he is warned by some Pharisees that Herod wishes to kill him, he expresses his determination to proceed to Jerusalem as it is there that he must die (13:33).[790] This is turn is followed by an oracle against Jerusalem because she kills those whom God was sent to warn her – a text that in Matthew comes after the

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[786] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 91.
[787] Goodman, 262.
[788] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 91.
[789] Marshall, *Luke*, 567-68.
[790] Ellis, *Luke*, 190.

triumphal entry into the city (Mt. 23:37-39) and just before the long discourse concerning the end of the age (Mt. 24:1-51). There is therefore a sense that the gospel is moving towards a climax.[791]

The parable is clearly eschatological and does not include the present, as Hahn has suggested.[792] It is introduced by a question asked by one of Jesus' followers: "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" (13:23). This question sets the limits within which the parable operates – the salvation of some and the loss of others. Entrance into God's kingdom is represented by a great banquet, a frequent motif in the relevant literature.[793] Thus the setting is within the confines of a building and behind a door (13:25) where the "master" determines who may and may not come in, and the guests recline a position common in banquets in the Greco-Roman world.

While the comparison of the blessings of the coming age with a banquet is conventional, the statement on who will be in and who will be left out is meant to take the reader by surprise. Both Matthew and Luke mention the presence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the fathers of the Jewish nation, which would give the impression that this is a banquet for the Jews. Luke includes "all the prophets" whereas Matthew does not. But the parable surprises because there will be others beyond the Jews. Matthew has the word "many" (πολλοί) to indicate the large number of those "others" followed by the phrase "from the east and the west". The mention of the east and west denotes the whole world.[794] Luke omits "many" but includes the other two extremes of the compass, north and south, as if wanting to give an even broader sweep of territory from where people will come to the banquet. Those from the four corners of the earth are not diaspora Jews, or at least not limited to them; the language does not permit such limits. Clearly, Luke has in mind the gentile mission of the church. [795] Even in Matthew the gentile element is underlined since the saying concludes a passage about the faith of a gentile centurion.[796] In the great banquet therefore, in the presence of the patriarchs of the Jews, Gentiles will be admitted.

Even more surprising is the exclusion of at least some Jews. Chapter 13 begins with a warning that anyone is likely to perish unless they repent (13:1-5).

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[791] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 561-3.
[792] Hahn, 34.
[793] Ellis, *Luke*, 189. Mt. 25:10-30; Rev. 19:9; 1QSa 1:11-22.
[794] Marshall, *Luke*, 567.
[795] Gooding, 262.
[796] Gundry, *Matthew*, 145.

Then follows the parable of the Fig Tree, which, unproductive despite all the care it received was destined to be uprooted (13:5-9). This parable as it appears in Matthew and Luke is intended as a representation of the Jewish nation, which was the beneficiary of the blessings of God but failed to produce fruit. Luke then records an incident in a synagogue in which, during the Sabbath, Jesus heals a woman who had suffered for eighteen years (13:10-17). While the common folk rejoiced the synagogue leader and others opposed to Jesus were deeply offended (13:14,17). Against such a background, the parable of the Narrow Door functions to warn the leadership of Israel – those who believe they most naturally belong to the kingdom of God should watch lest they find themselves excluded.[797]

It is this group that we consider more closely. In 13:24 these unrepentant Jews will attempt to enter the banquet. Obviously they not only know about it, but also think they deserve a place among its guests. Luke says they "will not be able". The Greek οὐκ ἰσχύσουσιν suggests a deliberate and sustained attempt to enter, which, nonetheless, will fail. Failing that, they resort to entreaties reminding the master of the banquet, who is none else than Jesus,[798] how he ate in their company[799] and taught in their towns. His response however, is clear and unequivocal – he will not admit them for they are workers of iniquity. They are therefore left outside where there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth".

Luke describes the fate of the "workers of iniquity" primarily in negative terms – what they will miss rather than what they will suffer. Their chief punishment is exclusion from the kingdom. Luke notes they will be "thrown out". The Greek ἐκβαλλομένους comes from the root βάλλω commonly used in the gospels in descriptions of punishment. The idea here is probably softer than the English "thrown out" implies.[800] They find themselves excluded rather than violently thrown out.[801]

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[797] Liefeld, 980, notes that the phrase ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ (13:31), which immediately follows the parable of the Narrow Door and introduces a request from the Pharisees that he depart from Galilee, indicates the parable is addressed to them. In turn, using Herod's threats against Jesus as an excuse, the Pharisees ask him to leave Galilee.

[798] This is clear since those outside remind him how he taught in their towns. Modern studies of the parables often aim to determine the possible original format of a parable and as such try to exclude any editorial workings through which it might have evolved. For the purpose of this study, however, it is important to see the parable as it stands in its present form and context, for it is only as such that Luke's or Matthew's purpose of the use of the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth" becomes clear.

[799] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 557, observes that the phrase "we ate and drank in your presence" is an LXX expression of friendship (2 Sam. 11:13).

[800] See for example the use of variants of ἐκβάλλω: in Mt. 9:25 of the people that were taken out of the room where the ruler's dead daughter lay; in Mt.9:38 where Jesus tells the disciples to pray that the

The emphasis on the notion of exclusion is also evident in the language with which the master commands them to go (ἀπόστητε). The command to "go away" indicates they have nothing in common with those in the banquet hall and therefore no place there. What they will do, or where there will go is irrelevant. What is relevant is that they have no place in the kingdom.

The only phrase Luke uses to describe the fate of those outside is "weeping and gnashing of teeth". This will happen when they find themselves excluded from the kingdom. This phrase has received a number of interpretations. Liefeld finds in it an expression of the horror of the coming doom.[802] Rengstorf suggests that the gnashing of teeth is in parallel to the "weeping" and denotes a "despairing remorse" so strong that it shakes the body.[803] Filson understands it as a "figurative expression of disappointment and pain" that need not imply physical punishment.[804] The problem with such suggestions is that they reflect the views of their respective admonitors on what hell is, than a strict exposition of the text. Lenski probably surpasses them all in imposing a foreign meaning to the text, when he holds that the phrase reflects the "excruciating torment" that those excluded from the kingdom will feel.[805] Hendriksen lags not far behind when he suggests that the gnashing of teeth "denotes excruciating pain and frenzied anger" that will never end.[806]

In light of the parallels from the LXX, particularly the Psalms, and also of the "gnashing of the teeth" in Acts 7:54, most commentators recognize in the weeping and gnashing of teeth sorrow and rage respectively.[807] In this respect, there are some close parallels between Luke 13:28 and Psalm 112:10. In both passages, the blessedness of the righteous is either stated or implied. In Psalm 112, the majority of the song (112:1-11) is a recounting of the blessings the righteous will inherit. In the parable of the Narrow Door, the inheritance is participation in a great heavenly banquet in the company of the patriarchs and "all the prophets".

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lord of the harvest sent workers to help in the harvest; in Mt. 12:20 where Jesus will "bring out" justice to the nations; in Mk. 1:12 where the Spirit leads Jesus to the desert to be templed (see also Mt. 12:35; 13:52; Mk. 5:40; Lk. 6:42; 10:2; 10:35). Clearly ἐκβάλλω has much softer connotations that the English "throw out" in the above instances.

[801] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 558.

[802] Liefeld, 980.

[803] Rengstorf, TDNT, 1:642.

[804] Filson, 111.

[805] Lenski, *Luke*, 332.

[806] Hendriksen, 398.

[807] E.g. Marshall, *Luke*, 567; Davies and Allison, 2:34.

More importantly, the gnashing of the teeth follows upon "seeing". In Psalm 112:10 the sinner will "see" (ὄψεται) the blessings of the righteous and will gnash his teeth in anger and envy. In Luke, the "workers of iniquity" likewise gnash their teeth only when they "see" (ὄψησθε) multitudes coming from the four corners of the earth into the banquet, while they find themselves excluded. The idea of envy, present in the Psalm (see above), is not immediately apparent in the language of Luke though it fits the context – the Jewish leaders who considered themselves the legitimate participants at the kingdom banquet, could not but feel envy at the sight of multitudes entering while they find themselves excluded, especially since the multitudes include Gentiles. Whereas the "weeping" connotes sadness, the gnashing of teeth represents the anger those excluded feel presumably towards the master who has excluded them, and towards those who have taken their place.

The relation between Psalm 112 and Luke 13:28 is further strengthened by the fact that in the parable of the Narrow Door, Luke repeatedly draws language from the Psalms. The reply of the master to the entreaties of those excluded comes from Psalm 6:9:

> ἀπόστητε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ πάντες οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν (Ps. 6:9)
>
> ἀπόστητε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ πάντες ἐργάται ἀδικίας (Lk. 13:27).
>
> ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν (Mt. 7:23)

As is evident, Luke follows accurately the first clause of the text from Psalms whereas Matthew departs both in his use of the verb ἀποχωρεῖτε in the place of ἀπόστητε and in that he misses the inclusive πάντες. In contrast, Matthew is closer to the LXX is the second clause, whereas Luke departs and substitutes ἐργάται for ἐργαζόμενοι and ἀδικίας for ἀνομίαν. Nonetheless, even where he departs Luke retains language not uncommon in the Psalms. Marshall observes[808] that ἐργάται is probably taken from Q.[809] As for ἀδικία, Luke may have used this stronger word in the place of ἀνομίαν to underline the wickedness of those excluded.[810] Either,

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[808] Marshall, *Luke*, 567. Cf. the following LXX readings, or variant readings for the following Pss:
14:4 ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀδικίαν (Vaticanus)
28:3 ἐργαζομένων ἀδικίαν (Alexandrinus)
7:14 where ἀδικία and ἀνομίαν appear together in the same verse.

[809] Marshall, *Luke*, 567.

[810] Marshall, *Luke*, 567.

therefore, Luke has redacted his source in order to emphasize a given point, while adhering to Psalmic language, or alternatively, follows Q more closely than Matthew, or yet might have been utilizing a lost variant of Psalm 6:9.

Furthermore, Fitzmyer notes that in 13:29 (from Q) we have another allusion to Psalm 107:3. This verse praises God for gathering his people from the "east and west and north and south" delivering them from their enemies. While Matthew mentions only the "east and the west" (Mat. 8:11), Luke is closer to the Psalm in mentioning all points of the compass.[811] It is evident that behind Luke looms Psalm 107:3 either through Q if he retains a more authentic reading, or directly through editorial adjustment. It is worth noting that Luke in his gospel twice alludes to Psalm 107,[812] indicating that he understood the promise of the ingathering from the four corners of the earth, not simply as a return from exile, as possibly the context of the Psalm calls for,[813] but as a greater spiritual deliverance wrought through Jesus the Messiah.

Bringing the above threads together, we draw several conclusions. First, the suggestion that here the perpetual torment of the wicked is envisaged which in turn causes weeping and gnashing of teeth has no foundation in this passage. Those who suggest as much are simply imposing a foreign concept onto the text. In light of the extant parallels, the weeping represents disappointment at the thought of being excluded from the kingdom, and their gnashing of teeth denotes anger towards the master for having excluded them, and, possibly, their envy towards the Gentiles who come into the kingdom from the four corners of the earth. How long this will last we are not told; probably not very long, since the main punishment of those rejected is not said to be some prolonged agony, but rather their exclusion from the kingdom appears to be punishment enough. Indeed, in light of the close relationship between this passage in Luke, the Psalms in general, and Psalm 112:10 in particular, it may even be suggested that the wicked soon perish in their anger, as was the case with the wicked in Psalm 112:10. But to suggest this is to move beyond what the text of Luke specifically states.

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[811] Cf. Zech. 2:6.

[812] First, in Lk. 1:79 where Zechariah the father of the Baptist, quoting Ps. 107:10, prophesies that Jesus would bring light to those "sitting in darkness". Second, in Lk. 7:30, he applies the words of Ps. 107:11 about Israel's rebelliousness towards God to the Pharisees and their obstinent refusal to receive Jesus.

[813] Liefeld, 979-980.

Chapter XV

Matthew 8:12

> "When Jesus heard him, he marvelled, and said to those who followed him, 'Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from the east and west and sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth [lit. "there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth"]" (Mt. 8:10-12).

Having considered Luke 13:28, we turn to the use of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" in Matthew. Matthew uses the phrase six times. The one closest to Luke 13:28 is Matthew 8:12 as they both derive from the same Q tradition.[814] However, the contexts are decidedly different. While in Luke the saying appears towards the conclusion of the parable of the Narrow Gate, in Matthew it occurs within the incident of the healing of the centurion's servant, an incident that in turn corresponds to Luke 7:1-10.[815]

In Matthew, the healing of the servant is the second in a unit of three healing miracles (8:1-14), which introduce Jesus' healing ministry. It follows the long discourse of the "Sermon on the Mount". Jesus enters Capernaum where a centurion approaches and requests that Jesus heal his ailing servant. Jesus expresses a willingness to go to the man's house,[816] but the centurion, realizing that for a Jew to

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[814] The healing of the centurion's servant is the only healing in Matthew that does not derive from Mark. There are a number of differences between Matthew and Luke. In Matthew it is the παῖς who suffers, while in Luke it is the δοῦλος (though Luke uses παῖς in 7:7 and παῖς can have the meaning of "servant"); in Matthew the servant is paralysed while in Luke he is near death; most importantly, in contrast to the personal meeting between Jesus and the centurion in Matthew, in Luke the two never come face to face. For a fuller discussion see Hagner, 205-6. A related account related to the same tradition appears in John 4:46b-54.

[815] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 97. Cf. Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:12-13.

[816] The Greek ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν is often understood as a question (so e.g. Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:12; Bultmann, 38), with the pronoun added for emphasis: "shall *I*, a Jew, come to a Gentile's house, to heal your servant?" In such a case, the question would not reflect astonishment or indignation on Jesus' part. Rather, in light of Jesus' compliments on the faith of the centurion and the early ministry of the church to the Gentiles, the question is intended to challenge the centurion to reveal his faith in the authority of Jesus, as indeed happens. See also the seeming refusal of Jesus to help the Syro-phoenician woman on the grounds that she is a Gentile (Mt. 15:21-28), which only serves to bring her faith into starker contrast to the unbelief and hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders (Mt. 15:1-20). In contrast, Beare, 207, understands Jesus' words as a statement: "I will come and heal him," which

visit the house of a Gentile would be improper,[817] requests that Jesus only say a word for the servant to be healed. Jesus marvels at the faith of the centurion and declares that even in Israel he has not met such faith.

The declaration in turn prompts the statement in 8:11-12 about "many" who will come into the kingdom from the east and the west while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown outside where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. These two verses parallel closely Luke 13:28-29 and will be given our attention.

There are a number of similarities between Matthew 8:11-12 and Luke 13:28. First, the setting, as in Luke, is the end of the age. Several elements indicate this. The description of a banquet in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are present points beyond the confines of this age.[818] The coming of the "many", while already a reality in the early Church as the gospel of Matthew was taking form, clearly envisages a large flow of people into the Church and is set in the future. The expulsion of the sons of the kingdom from the kingdom into the outer darkness cannot be taken as a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem; clearly it envisages a future and more dramatic rejection on the day of judgement.

This passage, as its parallel in Luke, envisages the gathering of Gentiles into the kingdom and the expulsion of Jews.[819] Attempts have been made to find other grounds for distinction here. Davies and Allison, for example, while not rejecting outright the Gentile/Jew contrast suggest that Matthew more likely has in mind a contrast between Palestinian and Diaspora, or even between privileged and underprivileged Jews.[820] Thus, when Jesus declares he has not found faith like the centurion's even in Israel they understand "Israel" to refer to the geographical boundaries of Palestine and its inhabitants rather than to Jews as a whole. But this

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would be more in line with the Matthean approach of Jesus taking the initiative. In a similar vein, Gundry, (*Matthew*, 142-3), notes that while Luke uses the descriptive phrase "and Jesus went with them" (Lk. 7:6) Matthew has Jesus taking the initiative stating "I will come and heal him," in this way emphasising his authority and initiative.

[817] For a Jew to enter the house of a Gentile might render him ceremonially defiled (see Acts 10:28 and Hagner, 205-6), and this is perhaps what the centurion has in mind, since, according to Luke7:5, he was friendly towards the Jews and even built a synagogue. Carson, 202-3, is of the opinion that the centurion's reluctance to have Jesus enter his house rather stemmed from his own sense of unworthiness.

[818] Such a banquet is anticipated in both the Old and New Testaments and in other Jewish literature. See eg. Is. 25:6; Mat. 22:1–14; 25:10; Rev. 19:9; Luke 14:15–16; *b.Pesh.* 119b; *Exod. Rab.* 25,10. Cf. Behm, TDNT, 2:34-35, and Strack-Billerbeck, 4:1154-56.

[819] Fenton, 125. Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:15.

[820] Davies and Allison, 2:26-27.

does not explain why the centurion is clearly a Gentile, not a Diaspora Jew.[821] Fitzmyer in turn is of the opinion that those expelled from the kingdom are evil disciples.[822]

Such suggestions do not do take into full account the thrust of the passage. In the gospel of Matthew the incident of the centurion is the first instance in which Jesus discourses with a Gentile.[823] A comparison with the Lukan version can shed some light on the purpose of Matthew. In Luke the centurion first sends a group of respected Jews possibly to makes his appeal more acceptable (7:3-5). They, in turn, speak in a complimentary way of the centurion underlining his love for the Jewish faith and his benevolent acts towards it. The implication is that this man is no ordinary Gentile but a man closely attached to the Jewish faith. Matthew does not reject such an image; indeed, the centurion's reluctance to have Jesus visit his house (8:8) as discussed above, indicates his awareness of Jewish sensitivities with regard to relations between Jews and Gentiles and respects them. Nonetheless, neither does he purposefully build an image of the righteous Gentile. For Matthew, the centurion is not worthy because of his possible sympathies for the Jewish faith; he is worthy only because he has recognized the true authority of Jesus, something which the Jews have failed to do.[824] Thus, when Matthew draws a contrast between the centurion's faith and the lack of faith Jesus meets in "Israel", he is not distinguishing between one class of Jews and another but between the Gentile who has exercised faith and is worthy of the kingdom and those Jews who have failed to believe in a similar fashion.[825]

This is evident throughout the passage in the language Matthew has chosen to use. Whereas in Luke Jesus addresses those who will be expelled from the kingdom

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[821] The notions Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism are not as clear as they were once thought to be. Would Paul prior to his conversion be considered a Palestinian or a Diaspora Jew? He came from Tarsus, a Diaspora city, but was educated at the feet of the foremost Jewish teacher of the age, Gamaliel. The flow of students into Palestine to study under famed rabbis or of Palestinian Jews to other parts of the Roman Empire and beyond seems to have been constant, while Palestine itself had a considerable Gentile and Hellenistic population and influence as is testified by the prominence of Greek names and language throughout its confines (see Hengel, *Hellenism* who argues that Hellenistic influence had penetrated all strata of Jewish society and compare with Tcherikover, *Civilization,* who tries to downplay such influence).

[822] Fitzmyer, 1023, maintains that in contrast to Matthew, Luke does indeed envisage the ingathering of the Gentiles.

[823] There is of course the visit of the three wise men shortly after Jesus' birth (Mt. 2:1-12) which is in stark contrast to the response of Herod who wants to kill the baby (Mt. 2:7-18) or even of the spiritual leadership of Israel who, though aware of the prophecies about Bethlehem, fail to note the birth (Mt. 2:4). As such, the visit of the wise man might prefigure the coming to faith of other Gentiles.

[824] Hagner, 200-206, notes that the way the centurion addresses Jesus as κύριε suggests that he regarded him as uniquely endowed by God with authority over the physical realm.

[825] Fenton, 124.

as "you" - which could be taken to apply either to those to whom the parable is addressed in the specific context or to the Jewish nation in a more general sense - Matthew calls them "sons of the kingdom". The phrase "sons of" is a Semitic idiom and in this case means "those who should inherit the kingdom," "the rightful heirs," the Jewish nation.[826] According to Hagner, it is a technical expression for the covenant people of God.[827] In Matthew 21:43, at the conclusion of the parable of the Evil Tenants which is a direct rebuke on the Jewish leadership, Matthew uses similar language and warns them that the "kingdom of God" would be removed from them and be given to "another nation". The idea of the kingdom naturally belonging to the Jews but being removed from them and given to others calls us to regard the "sons of the kingdom" of Matthew 8:12 as the representatives of the Jews, [828] those who most opposed Jesus, and in the centurion a first fruit of the evangelization of the nations.[829]

Another element pointing in the same direction is the mention of the east and the west. We already saw how Luke, possibly following Psalm 107:3, mentions all four corners of the compass which in turn envisions the saved coming from all the nations of the earth. That Matthew mentions only the east and the west does not limit his universal outlook. In his gospel Matthew mentions the two longitudinal extremes of the compass in a further passage. In 24:27 he compares the coming of the Son of Man in glory to the lightning that comes from the east and shines all the way to the west. The appearance of the Son of Man in Matthew 24 is not an isolated incident but a universal event presaged by such signs as wars on a large scale among the nations (24:6,7),[830] the proclamation of the gospel to "all the nations" (24:14)[831] and

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[826] Allen, 78. Here it can only refer to the Jews since they considered themselves the children of Abraham (Mt. 3:9-12), who holds here a prominent position in the banquet.

[827] Hagner, 205-6.

[828] The contrast Gentile-Jew rather than poor Jew-rich Jew, Diaspora Jew-Palestinian Jew, or good disciple-bad disciple seems best to fit the flow of the story. Yet, it should not be understood as a blanket statement against all Jews, for the evangelist himself was in all probability a Jewish Christian, nor as an unconditional acceptance of all Gentiles. The healing revolves around the acceptance of the authority of Jesus by the centurion and its rejection by the Jews and it is this issue, which becomes the defining point of who will enter the messianic banquet. Cf. Hagner, 202-6.

[829] France, *Matthew*, 260 writes: "This incident is a preview of the great insight which came later through another centurion's faith, 'Then to the Gentiles God has granted repentance unto life' (Acts 11:18)".

[830] Gundry, *Matthew*, 478. The language reflects such Old Testament passages as 2 Chr. 15:6 and Is. 19:2.

[831] Note the parallel phrases which serve to add emphasis to the universality:
ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ – "to all the inhabited world"
πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι – "to all the nations"

apocalyptic signs in the heavens (24:29-30).[832] Indeed the evangelization of the nations appears as a precondition for the coming of the end. The east and the west, therefore, in which the appearance of the Son of Man will be seen, represents a universal outlook and there is no reason to doubt that in the similar use of these two points of the compass in 8:11, Matthew sees the evangelization of the nations. The Jew-Gentile contrast, therefore, is the model that best accounts for the choice of terms in Matthew 8:5-13.[833]

The punishment of the expelled "sons of the kingdom" is outlined in 8:12. In the discussion of the parallel saying in Luke 13:23-30 it was noted that Luke places greater emphasis on what the "workers of iniquity" lose as a result of their iniquity rather than on what they actually suffer. Matthew follows a similar pattern but with less emphasis on the loss and slightly more on the punishment. Thus, Matthew says nothing of the desire of those outside to enter, about their entreaties, or about the firm reply of the master that there is no way he will let them in. Matthew simply states that the "sons of the kingdom" will be "thrown" outside. In describing the expulsion both evangelists use variant forms of the verb βάλλω – Luke ἐκβαλλομένους, Matthew ἐκβληθήσονται[834].

The main phrase that Matthew uses to describe the condition of the excluded sons of the kingdom is, as in Luke, the "weeping and gnashing of teeth". There is no reason to doubt that these words mean the same as they do in Luke. All the texts that we examined earlier in this Part suggest that while "weeping" represents the sorrow at the loss of the kingdom, the gnashing of the teeth represents anger towards the master for excluding them and possibly, together with envy, at the "many" who will come

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[832] Gundry, *Matthew*, 487, points to Is. 34:4 as the source of these signs in the heavens. Such signs became common harbingers of the end in prophetic and apocalyptic writings. Cf. especially Ez. 32:7-8, Joel 2:10, 31, 4:15, Hag. 2:6, 21, Rev. 6:12-13, 1 En. 80:4, 4 Ezr. 5:4, As. Mos. 10:5.

[833] Of interest to the question of who will be gathered from the east and the west are some Old Testament parallels. Carson, 202-3, notes that Mt. 8:11-12 has a close relationship with three different types of Old Testament texts: (1) those describing the gathering of Israel from the four corners of the earth (Ps. 107:3, Is. 43:5-6, 49:12); (2) those predicting the worship of God by Gentiles in all parts of the earth (Is. 45:6; 59:19; Mal. 1:11); (3) those predicting the coming of the Gentiles to Jerusalem (Is. 2:2-3; 60:34; Mich. 4:1-2; Zech 8:20-23). Gundry suggests that the closest literary parallels lie with the first group of texts (Gundry, *Old Testament*, 76ff). On this basis, France (*Jesus*, 63) suggests a typology in which the true "Israel", an Israel of faith, is being gathered from the Gentiles. This would be in line with the way Matthew applies Old Testament prophecies as being fulfilled in the followers of Jesus (Carson, 202-3).

[834] Some manuscripts (ℵ*; 0250; κ; $sy^{s.c.p.}$) for Matthew substitute ἐξελεύσονται for ἐκβληθήσονται perhaps to parallel the ἥξουσι of 8:11, or, in the view of Hagner, 205-6, to soften the impact of the punishment.

from the east and west.[835] In Luke, such a meaning seems certain in the light of the close relationship between Luke 13:23-30 and the Psalms where the "gnashing of teeth" appears. While in Matthew the connection with the Psalms is not as evident, nonetheless the similarity of language with Luke and the similar motif of a messianic banquet suggest that the phrase carries the same meaning.

Matthew does add an insight absent in Luke, in the phrase "the outer darkness". It is there that the weeping and gnashing of teeth takes place,[836] and this is worth looking at it in a little more detail. Does the fact that Matthew specifies that the weeping will take place in the "outer darkness" signify a special place of punishment?

Lenski has indeed found theological significance in the words "outer darkness". He suggests that the phrase is superlative which implies at least two types of darkness: (a) the spiritual darkness outside the kingdom which represents the "ignorant, deluded world" from which, however, salvation is possible, and (b) the darkness "utterly outside" from which none can escape.[837] He also notes that the darkness is conceived of as a place given the locative adverb ἐκεῖ. Davies and Allison agree when they note that the "place" of perdition is dark, despite the fire that burns there.[838]

It seems, however, that such suggestions read too much into the phrase. A more accurate picture may emerge if we consider all instances in which Matthew uses "outer darkness", namely, here and also 22:13 and 25:30. He only uses it in conjunction with the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth". However, in 13:42, 13:50 and 24:51 this motif occurs without the "outer darkness". The question naturally arises, why Matthew combines both phrases in some instances, while avoiding the "outer darkness" in others.

The answer is to be found in the respective contexts. Of the three times the "outer darkness" appears, the motif of a banquet is twice stated and once implied. In

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[835] See relevant discussion in that chapter. Turner, *Syntax,* 173 mistakenly assumes that the double use of the article "*the* weeping," "*the* gnashing" underlines the horror of the scene. The use of the article with each of the two words is necessitated by the fact that Matthew has chosen to describe the response of those outside by a noun rather than verb forms, which in turn make the description more vivid and specific – those rejected will not just weep and gnash their teeth but rather everything the words "weeping" and "gnashing" envisage will become a reality outside the banquet hall.

[836] ἐκεῖ ἔσται.

[837] Lenski, *Matthew*, 331.

[838] Davies and Allison, 2:30. It is true the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth" appears subsequently in Matthew with a furnace of fire (see below, Chapter XVII). However, in this instance, the outer darkness is little more than the darkness outside the banqueting hall to which the "sons of the kingdom" have been denied access.

8:12 it is the messianic banquet in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are present. In 22:13 the "outer darkness" appears in the conclusion to the parable about the wedding feast of the king's son; there, outside the feasting hall, the man without the appropriate garment is cast. In 25:30 it is a conclusion to the parable of the Talents. In this last instance no feast is mentioned but the whole parable revolves around the distant trip of the man who gave the talents and of his eventual return. The return of a rich man could plausibly be accompanied by a banquet, even if not explicitly mentioned. Indeed, it seems to be implied in the words of the rich man to his faithful servants: "*enter* into the *joy* of your master".[839]

In contrast, the "outer darkness" does not accompany the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" in the following cases: in Matthew 13:42 (the parable of the Wheat and Tares) where the tares are thrown in the fire; in 13:50 (the parable of the Net) where the wicked are thrown into the fire; in 24:51 (the parable of the Faithful Servant) where an unfaithful servant receives punishment for his unfaithfulness. In the first two instances, a banquet would be out of place since the parables deal with wheat/tares and fish respectively. In 24:51 the parable does entail a return of the master who was away. However, the return comes at an unexpected moment and part of the message of the parable lies in the fact that the master's sudden arrival catches the evil servant in his evil dealings unawares. As such, a banquet for the returning master would be out of place and destroy the element of surprise.

Therefore, the phrase τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον is not a superlative, implying different types of darkness. Neither is the double use of the article an attempt to add emphasis. Rather, it is a descriptive phrase – "the darkness *that* is outside".[840] It was common for banquets to take place in the evening.[841] In a time when there were few lights to light a dark night there was an obvious contrast with a lighted banqueting hall and the darkness outside. The "sons of the kingdom" were once in the kingdom, but now are thrown into the darkness, which is outside it. The phrase τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον may, therefore, simply be translated, "the darkness that is

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[839] For a fuller discussion of a feast in the parable of the Talents see chapter XIX below.

[840] Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:15, is one of the few commentators to acknowledge that the "outer darkness" is simply a reference to the darkness outside the banqueting hall. Yet, he still understands the whole motif to be a reference to hell the torments of which will be very real.

[841] Cf. the wedding feast in the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Mt. 25:1-12, where all the virgins had lamps. Additionally, when the bridegroom delayed, all the virgins fell asleep. The bridegroom did eventually arrive at around midnight. The lamps, sleeping and midnight arrival all indicate an evening wedding feast.

outside". The adverb ἐκεῖ likewise does not designate the place of eschatological punishment but the locale where the sons of the kingdom find themselves – outside the kingdom. Of course, the idea of the kingdom as a lighted banquet and of exclusion from it as relegation into the darkness does in and of itself contain a theological statement; the kingdom is a place of light, outside it is darkness. But proper exegesis requires that we proceed no further in reading into this passage elaborate images of punishment. It is not a description of hell. Any association between hell and the outer darkness completely misses the context.

In summary we may draw several conclusions. First, there is a very close similarity between this text and Luke 13:28-29. Though the two evangelists have placed the sayings about the kingdom and the exclusion of some from it in different settings, the sayings themselves appear in similar format and contain the same motif. In Luke the fate of the workers of iniquity involves their exclusion from the kingdom that in turn is a cause of sorrow and anger – and that is where the passage stops. If we were to comment on their fate, the only clue is the source from which Luke's language is drawn, namely Psalm 112:10, which suggests that the wicked will be consumed in their anger. While in Matthew the linguistic connection to the Psalms is not as evident, the close literary relation to Luke suggests a similar fate. Matthew does elaborate more on the fate of those expelled in the phrase "the outer darkness" but this is not a veiled reference to hell. It is language that finds meaning only within the symbolism of the kingdom as a banquet and only carries the notion of exclusion from the blessings the kingdom represents.

Chapter XVI

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

> "[40]Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. [41]The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, [42]and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth [lit. "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth"]. [43]The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear" (Matthew 13:40-43).

Matthew 13 is a chapter of parables. Matthew has brought together seven parables that comprise Jesus' third great discourse in the gospel.[842] The theme running throughout the six last parables is the kingdom of heaven and the end of the age. The parables, as a literary genre, have attracted considerable attention over the past decades and questions about the extent to which they go back to Jesus and in what format they may have been originally spoken have been discussed at length. I intend neither to deal with such issues nor to contribute to the discussion. For the purpose of the present study I shall consider the parables in their present form. While the question of authenticity is important and will be briefly discussed, my main concern is to determine their place in the eschatological expectations of Matthew.

Within the setting of Matthew 13, the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth" appears as a conclusion in two of the parables – the parable of the Wheat and Tares (13:24-30,36-43) and the parable of the Net (13:47-50). The chapter may be divided in two parts. The first part (13:1-35) opens with the parable of the Sower. The setting is the Sea of Galilee where Jesus teaches from a boat to crowds gathered at the seaside. The parable of the Sower is followed by three parables, the first of which, the Wheat and Tares, is concerned with the separation between the wicked and righteous at the end of the age, while the other two[843] describe the growth of the kingdom. The three parables are followed by an editorial explanation about why Jesus spoke in parables (13:34-35).

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[842] The two earlier discourses are the Sermon on the Mount (5:1-29) and the Mission Charge (10:1-10:42). Beare, 286, notes correctly that chapter 13 is not shaped into a sustained discourse, as there are changes of scene and of audience.

[843] The Mustard Seed (13:31-32) and the Leaven (13:33).

In the second part (13:13-58) Jesus leaves the crowd and enters a house where he is alone with the disciples. There he explains the Wheat and Tares and mentions three more parables. The first two revolve around the theme that there is need for sacrifice to gain the kingdom.[844] The third is the parable of the Net (13:47-50), which returns to the theme of the Wheat and Tares – the separation of people at the end of the age. There is parallel structure therefore in which two parables about the quiet growth of the kingdom are followed by a parable of judgement in the first part, and two parables about the great value of the kingdom are also followed by a parable of judgement in the second part. The mention of the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" comes first in the explanation of the parable of the Wheat and Tares, and second in the parable of the Net.[845] In this chapter I deal with the first, in the next with the second.

The parable of the Wheat and Tares is unique to Matthew.[846] It falls into two parts. First, the parable proper covers 13:24-29 and is now considered authentic by the majority of commentators.[847] The explanation of the parable follows in 13:37-43 and is in contrast usually considered secondary though the evidence is not conclusive.[848] Here I will first treat the parable, and then the interpretation.

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[844] The Hidden Treasure (13:44) and the Pearl (13:45-46).

[845] For the structure of this chapter within Matthew's framework see also Gundry, *Matthew*, 250-51.

[846] Gundry, *Matthew*, 261, sees it as Matthew's creation through a conflation of the parable of the Sower (13:1-23), the omitted Markan parable of the seed growing secretly (Mk. 4:26-29 – so also Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:322) and language from John the Baptist's preaching. Beare, 302-302, likewise sees a connection between the Tares and Mark's parable of the seed, but cautions that Matthew must have inherited his parable from his source since the central theme of the parable seems at variance with the following allegorical interpretation. Hagner, 381-4, thinks that Mark' and Matthew's parables differ so considerably that it is unlikely they are directly related. Indeed, in light of the abundance of different parables centring on the theme of growth and harvest, it should not surprise if two parables share common motifs but carry a different message.

[847] Davies and Allison, 2:409-411. The main arguments against its authenticity are its possible dependence on Mark 4:26-29 and the possibility of a post-resurrection setting in that is could be understood as an attempt to explain what should be done with evil in its ranks. The former is unlikely in the light of the decided differences between the two parables. The latter is not imperative. As Schweizer notes (*Matthew*, 305), the warning that evil will coexist with good could well be a addressed to any exclusivist group like the Pharisees, the Qumran community, or the Zealots.

[848] So Dodd, 183-4; Kingsbury, 65-66; Jeremias, *Parables*, 81-85, 224. Jeremias cites three main reasons: (1) the interpretation passes over in silence the apparent motive of the parable itself, namely, the exhortation to patience. Yet he misses the fact that in the parable proper the attention is focused on the harvest through the question of the servants whether they should clear the tares in the present and the master's reply that they should await the harvest. (2) The use of words such as διάβολος, in place of the more primitive σατανᾶς and κόσμος and βασιλεία without qualification, which he maintains, could not have been uttered by Jesus. However, διάβολος, was a common designation for the devil in earlier writings (eg. 1 Chron. 21:1; Job 1:6,7; Ps. 108:6; Zach. 3:1) while the fact that the other two nouns are used periphrastically does not automatically imply a Matthean creation. (3) Jeremias cites an apparently impressive array of 37 linguistic characteristics. A few are peculiar to Matthew but most appear in the other gospels, which would undermine his assertion of a Matthean creation. The rejection

A farmer goes out to his field and plants some good seed. During the night, an enemy comes and plants tares[849] among the wheat so that when the wheat comes up, the tares grow alongside it. The farmer's servants request permission to pull out the tares, but the farmer replies that in doing so, they might accidentally pull out some of the wheat as well.[850] He therefore instructs them to await the harvest time and then separate the wheat from the tares. The former they are to collect in the warehouse, the latter they are to burn.

Several elements in the parable seem to anticipate the explanation. The person who planted the good seed is first called simply ἄνθρωπος (13:24) but then οἰκοδεσπότης (13:26), which is reminiscent of language used elsewhere of Jesus.[851] Likewise, the servants address him as κύριε, which Hagner notes hints at the identification of the man with Jesus.[852]

The person who planted the weeds is labelled ὁ ἐχθρός (13:25). Jeremias considers the use of the article a Semitism and cites numerous examples where the definite article should be translated by an indefinite clause.[853] He points that within the context of the parable ἐχθρός appears also without the article when the master refers to him as "an enemy" (13:28). More likely, the use of the definite article might suggest the idea of a specific enemy. In this respect, the master refers to the enemy as "an enemy" (13:28) since he is just a farmer who does not know for sure who has planted the weeds, but the narrator who implies in the narration a deeper significance

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of the application as secondary is in line with the assumption that all allegorical interpretation could not have come from Jesus, but grew in the development of the tradition in the early church. The assertion that no parable contains allegory within is original setting is difficult to maintain absolutely. Indeed, a number of commentators are ready to accept the authenticity of the application either in its entirety or at its core (eg. Beasley-Murray, 135; Hill, *Matthew*, 235-7).

[849] The plant in question seems to be the noxious darnel (*Lolium tumulentum*) which is poisonous and which in its early stages of growth is difficult to distinguish from the wheat (Jeremias, *Parables*, 224, Davies and Allison, 2:412).

[850] Jeremias, Parables, 225, notes the tares were weeded out when the formation of heads of wheat did away with the similarity of the younger wheat and tares. In this instance, however, as Gundry, *Matthew*, 265, notes, the deliberate sowing has resulted in so many tares that their roots are intertwined; therefore, any weeding may result in the accidental uprooting of wheat. Cf. Luz, "Taumelloch," 156.

[851] In Mt. 10:25 the οἰκοδεσπότης is clearly Jesus; in the parabolic statement of 24:43 he is paralleled with the Son of Man in the context of the latter's glorious appearing. Cf. the use of ἄνθρωπος and οἰκοδεσπότης in Mt. 20:1 (ἀνθρώπῳ οἰκοδεσπότῃ) and in 21:33 (ἄνθρωπος... οἰκοδεσπότης). In the first instance it refers to Jesus, in the second to God. Cf. Hagner, 383.

[852] Hagner, 383. Matthew has κύριε 80 times, all with few exceptions as references to either God or Jesus.

[853] Jeremias, *Parables*, 11, 224. He cites e.g. Mk. 4:3; Mt. 5:15; 7:6; and 24-27 and notes that the trend is evident already in the LXX. He considers the Semitism an evidence of the Aramaic background in which the parables were first told.

than a mere agricultural incident identifies the enemy through the use of the article in 13:25. If such a hypothesis is correct, the enemy is none other than the devil.[854]

Two more things are worth noting. First, the reference to the harvest could be understood either as a reference to the harvest of the grain without need for further allegorisation, or alternatively as a reference to the final judgement as it was often used in Jewish literature.[855] Second, the master commands that at the time of the harvest the harvesters should gather the weeds πρὸς τὸ κατακαῦσαι – in order that they may be burned. It is often suggested that the weeds were used for fuel,[856] but this is hardly likely. A few bundles of darnels cannot sustain a fire for long enough to justify the labour needed to collect them into bundles. The command of the master is not to indicate the possible usefulness of the darnels but rather is an attempt to get rid of them.[857] In this respect the choice of the verb κατακαῦσαι is illustrative. The prefixed preposition κατά strengthens the impact of the verb so that it becomes the focus of the phrase. It conveys the meaning not only of burning something, possibly for a useful purpose, but rather of burning to consume and do away with.[858] Clearly the darnels have caused the farmer enough headache and he wants to be rid of them, root and branch. This is further indicated since, as Luz notes, the language here is influenced by similar language in the preaching of John the Baptist about the tree which does not bear fruit or the chaff which once winnowed is useless and is burned in "unquenchable" fire.[859]

Having looked at the parable proper, we now turn to the interpretation. As outlined in Matthew 13:37-43, the farmer is the Son of Man (13:37), the field is the world,[860] the good seed the sons of the kingdom,[861] and the tares the sons of this world

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[854] Mt. 13:39; Fenton, 225-6.
[855] Joel 3:13; Jer. 51:33; Hos. 6:11; 4 Ez. 4:28-9; 2 Bar. 70:2.
[856] Eg. so Beare, 303, Jeremias *Parables*, 225.
[857] In this respect an Old Testament parallel might be useful. Hill, *Matthew*, 235-7, has noted that behind the application of the parable lies Zeph. 1:3 which likewise depicts the destruction of the wicked on the earth. There the verb συλλέγω is also used and translates the Hebrew אסף which Hill renders as "gather together for destruction". This gathering for destruction would not be in line with common agricultural practice and is introduced to enhance the element of purpose in the separation of the wheat from the tares in the final judgement.
[858] Liddell and Scott, 892.
[859] Luz, *Matthäus*, 3:325; cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 265. The relevant passage is Mt. 3:12.
[860] Rather than the church. Davies and Allison, 2:430, argue that the kingdom is usually a reference to the chuch but here it is to the world. Schweizer, *Matthew*, 311, suggests that the kingdom of the Son of Man encompasses the whole world in that it is to be proclaimed everywhere, while Allen, 153, more insightfully noted that when the Son of Man comes, all the world will become his kingdom.
[861] Clearly, the true sons of the kingdom, not those expelled in Matthew 8:12.

(13:38). The enemy who planted the tares is the devil (13:39). The harvest is the end of the age and the harvesters are the angels (13:39).

A number of elements need to be underlined in relation to the parable's application concerning the destiny of those represented by the tares. 13:40 begins ὥσπερ οὖν and continues οὕτως ἔσται. In English it can be rendered "just as... so it will be".[862] The aim is to create the closest possible parallel between two things – in this case between the burning of the tares in the original parable, and the destruction of the wicked in the allegorical interpretation concerning the end of the age.[863] The day of judgement will thus be to the wicked a parallel to what the day of harvest is to the tares – they will be consumed in a similar fashion.

13:41 adds further insights to the picture. The Son of Man will send his angels to gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all who practise lawlessness. Two elements are worth noting. First, not only persons are taken out of the kingdom but all causes of sin - πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα. The construction is in the neuter and possibly refers to inanimate things,[864] perhaps idols.[865] The presence of inanimate things in the fiery furnace makes it unlikely that the furnace functions as a symbol of torment in hell. Second, those practising lawlessness and all causes of sin are gathered "out of" the kingdom. The verb συλλέξουσιν is also used for the tares being gathered out of the ground and separated from the wheat (13:30,40). They are gathered out of the kingdom in a process of cleansing. Envisaged here is not so much a vengeful punishment of sinners but rather a cleansing process in which anything that offends, animate or inanimate, is removed from the kingdom.

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[862] The same construction appears in Mt. 12:40 where the stay of Jesus in the grave is compared to the stay of Jonah in the belly of the fish that swallowed him.

[863] συντέλεια αἰῶνος used in 13:39,40,49; 24:3; 28:20. Cf. 4 Ezr. 7:113.

[864] Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:340-1, notes that in the Bible the word always refers to inanimate things, though in this instance he allows for it to be applied to humans.

[865] Hagner, 393-4, also regards Zeph. 1:3 as a source for the language. He notes that despite the use of the neuter the reference is again to persons, those who cause others to stumble, which for Matthew is a grave offence (cf. Mt. 18:6-7). Hagner, however, fails to note that Zeph. 1:3 envisages a complete destruction of everything on the land, not just humans. Zeph. 1:3 literally reads המכשלות את־הרשׁעים which can be translated "the stumbling blocks with the wicked". This phrase is obscure enough that ammendations have been suggested. The first two words appear elsewhere only in Is. 3:6 where they mean "ruins" leading the NIV translators to render Zeph. 1:3, "the wicked will have only heaps of rubble". If such a meaning is accepted behind the Hebrew, Matthew's allusion is a free rendering. However, Carson, 324-7, notes that the Hebrew may well mean "stumbling-blocks" or "offences" and this is how the targums understand it. Cuthart and Gordon, 165, translate the Aramaic as "the snares of the wicked have multiplied". If Carson is correct, the phrase may refer to idols or people who cause offence and Matthew's rendering would be accurate. The neuter of Matthew 13:40, therefore, refers either to humans, or inanimate offences, or both.

The lawless and the causes of sin are then cast into a furnace of fire. The phrase βαλοῦσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός is repeated again in 13:50 as a conclusion to the parable of the Net. It is drawn almost verbatim from Daniel 3:6.[866] The context there is king Nebuchadnezzar's command that anyone who will not worship his image be thrown into a burning furnace of fire, as eventually happens to the three Jewish boys. The intentional allusion to that story adds a touch of irony to the parable. In Daniel 3:6 the messengers of a human king decree that those who disobey him are worthy of death. The Jewish boys disobey and are thrown into the "furnace of fire" which is intended to end their life.[867] Though condemned by the king, the narration considers the boys to be innocent because their disobedience does not spring from arrogance but from a desire to remain faithful to God, an authority higher than the king. Because of their fidelity, the fire does not kill them; instead they are rescued by divine intervention from the wrath of the king.

In the parable the picture is reversed. The person pictured as narrating the parable is Jesus, a messenger of none other than the God of heaven. He decrees the same punishment against God's enemies as that decreed by Nebuchadnezzar's messengers. Since there is no higher authority than God those represented by the tares are both inexcusable and without the hope of rescue. Their fate is sealed. Clearly therefore this subversion of the story of Daniel underlines the certainty of the coming doom, while the parallel to the mode of punishment chosen by Nebuchadnezzar in turn dispels any suggestion that the interpretation of the parable of the Wheat and Tares anticipates the torment of human beings.

The quotation from Daniel 3:6 is followed by the phrase ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμός καὶ ὁ βρυγμός τῶν ὀδόντων. In Matthew this phrase has become a set formula to conclude different descriptions of the day of judgement. It is used in the discourse following the healing of the centurion's servant (Mt. 8:12) as well as in a total of six parables (Mt. 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30 and Lk. 13:28). As such, it does not need to fit neatly with the details of the parable but rather serves as a solemn conclusion added by Matthew or his special source, to connect this parable with other like themes. The ἐκεῖ therefore need not be understood to imply that the weeping and

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[866] Compare: ἐμβάλουσιν αὐτόν εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός (Dan. 3:6)
with βάλουσιν αὐτούς εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός (Mt. 13:42).

[867] Dan. 3:19. The king in his anger orders the fire to be burned seven times hotter with the result that the king's servants whose duty is to throw the boys in the fire die from the extensive heat.

gnashing will take place "in" the fiery furnace. If the parable intended to describe any feelings in a fiery furnace, pain and anguish would have been much more appropriate and such could not last long. The emphasis here as elsewhere is on the exclusion or removal from the kingdom of everything that causes offence. The phrase is, therefore, justified since those excluded will feel the disappointment and anger already encountered in previous descriptions of the exclusion of the wicked from the kingdom.

In this respect the relation between 13:42 and 43 is worth noting. 13:42 describes the casting into the fire of those who do iniquity. 13:43 anticipates the righteous in the kingdom of the Father where they will shine as the sun. 13:43 is connected to 42 with τότε – "then". Only when this process of cleansing at the end of the age has been completed will the righteous shine like the sun.

The language has similarities with the transfiguration of Jesus (Mt. 17:2).[868] The imagery also seems to draw from Daniel 12:3 one of the earliest clear references to a belief in a bodily resurrection. The parable does not as such mention or hint at a bodily resurrection. Nonetheless, the harvest as a depiction of the final judgement, the allusion to the story of the three boys, even the choice of such a tangible metaphor as the agricultural process of removing the tares from the wheat, all fit better the context of the corporeal judgement/punishment that we have encountered elsewhere in Matthew.

Several conclusions are in order. First, the parable likely goes back to Jesus, including the allegorical interpretation possibly since it seems to be anticipated in the construction of the parable itself. Second, the parable hints at and the interpretation verifies that envisaged here is the destruction rather than torment of the wicked. Their destruction is not an act of vengeance but rather an attempt to purify the kingdom from anything causing sin. Third, the phrase weeping and gnashing of teeth seems out of place with the flow of the parable and interpretation but is appended in order to link this parable to other parables and/or sayings in the gospel of Matthew that deal with the judgement at the end of the age. As such, it retains its meaning as an expression of sorrow and anger at the exclusion from the kingdom.

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[868] Compare ἔλαμψε in Mt. 17:2 with ἐκλάμψουσιν in Mt. 13:43 an hapax legomenon. See also 2 Sam. 23:3-4; SE 1 En. 39:7; 104:2.

Chapter XVII

Matthew 13:47-50

> "[47]Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; [48]when it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. [49]So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous, [50]and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth" (Matthew 13:47-50).

The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" appears one more time in the chapter of the parables, namely in 13:50 as the conclusion to the parable of the Net. In the structure of Matthew 13 the parable of the Net corresponds to that of the Wheat and Tares.[869] The two parables have close parallels. 13:49 follows the language of 13:41,[870] while 13:50 reproduces verbatim 13:42. Both parables deal with the final judgement. In this chapter I will first offer comments on the structure of the parable and then discuss some of the linguistic elements that describe the day of judgement.

The parable consists of the parable proper in 13:47-48 and the application in 13:49-50. Some commentators have attempted to separate the two on grounds that they contain incompatible elements. Manson was of the opinion that the parable was initially about the apostles being "fishers of men" with the application arbitrarily making it a parable of the end of the age.[871] But it is difficult to maintain that a parable about "fishers of men" could be transformed so thoroughly into the present parable of the final judgement. Manson also failed to see that the parable as it stands centres around the separation of the fish on the seashore, not the actual fishing. Thus, while the fish are sorted out as soon as the boat reaches dry land, the people are not sorted out until the day of judgement. Beare notes that the mention of the fiery furnace is likewise inappropriate since "bad" fish may be thrown back into the sea,

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[869] For a discussion of the structure of Mt. 13 see Carson, 330-1.

[870] Compare ἀποστελεῖ... τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ with ἐξελεύσονται οἱ ἄγγελοι.
συλλέξουσιν ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας with ἀφοριοῦσι ἐκ μέσου τῶν δικαίων.
πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα καὶ τοὺς ποιοῦντας τὴν ἀνομίαν with τοὺς πονηροὺς in 13:41 and 13:49 respectively.

[871] Manson, 197.

buried for use as fertilizer, but certainly not thrown into a fiery furnace.[872] The observation is certainly correct; yet, as Carson notes, such suggestions fail to distinguish between the symbol with what is symbolized.[873] The parable's interpretation is introduced by the explanatory "so it will be at the close of the age". This clearly indicates that the parable is a metaphor of the final judgement rather than a literal representation. For the purpose of the present study, I shall consider the parable in its current form, identifying redactional contributions in order to determine the place of the parable in Matthew's anticipation of the judgement.

The parable of the Tares places emphasis both on the time span between the proclamation of the gospel in the present and the day of judgement, and the judgement itself. That of the Net has a similar twofold division but concentrates mainly on the judgement. The proclamation of the gospel is compared to a net that is cast and gathers both good and "bad" fish but the focus is on the separation. From the parable and its application I would like to underscore three elements.

First, the word for "bad" (σαπρὰ) literally denotes that which is "rotten" or "putrid".[874] Obviously, the net cannot collect "rotten" fish for it has just been drawn fresh from the water. Fenton sees the distinction as being between clean and unclean fish.[875] Carson is of the opinion that here it is to be understood slightly differently as "worthless" – a suggestion that is in danger of missing a deliberate emphasis.[876] Gundry, more correctly, sees in σαπρὰ a connection to Matthew 7:17-18 and 12:33 (cf. Luke 7:43)[877] about the metaphors of the good tree which bears fruit and the bad tree which does not.[878] There are two types of trees, καλὸν and σαπρὸν; and there

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[872] Beare, 315-6.
[873] Carson, 330.
[874] Liddell and Scott, 1583.
[875] Fenton, 229.
[876] Carson, 330.
[877] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 77.
[878] Gundry, *Matthew*, 280. While Gundry's conclusion seems correct the way he arrives at it is questionable. The basis behind his conclusion is that the adjective σαπρὰ is neuter and this would be incompatible if it were used in reference to the masculine noun ἰχθύας. The use of the neuter therefore can only point back to the neuter σαπρὸν δένδρον of Mt. 7:17-18; 12:33. What Gundry fails to notice, however, is that the neuter can easily be explained by reference to the immediate context. First, the word ἰχθύας does not appear in the text. In addition to ἰχθύας, which is indeed masculine, the Greek also has the word ὀψάριον for "fish" (neuter). If the text indeed refers to fish, since it does not use either of the two possible words, the neuter is equally valid as the masculine. Second, the text does not state that the net brought in different types of fish, but rather that it brought in "of all kind" – ἐκ παντὸς γένους. The Greek can be understood to mean that it brought in all kinds of water organisms – crabs, fish – whatever could grow in the sea of Galilee. In such a setting, the neuter is

are two types of fish the net brings in, καλὰ and σαπρὰ. As such, σαπρὰ has been taken over from a Q passage about good and bad trees and added here to create a deliberate connection to the fate of the bad trees.

A second element of note is that when the net has been brought to dry land the good fish are placed in a basket. The bad fish are thrown away. The Greek here is again rather awkward. Ἔξω ἔβαλλον literally means "they put [the bad fish] outside". Outside what? Since the process of selection takes place on the seaside the bad fish are already "outside" their natural habitat, the lake. It could mean "outside the baskets" in which the good fish are placed. But again, the bad fish were not in the basket in the first place – they were in the net. We have already come across variants of the verb βάλλω in descriptions of judgement.[879] We have also seen the idea of ἔξω being the place for those ejected from the kingdom of God this especially being the case in instances where the kingdom is described in banquet language.[880] In light of these, the phrase functions as a linguistic link between this parable and such texts that use βάλλω and ἔξω and is likely the product of redaction. In light of 13:49 that follows it also adds emphasis to the process of separation. The bad fish are removed from the midst of the good. And as was the case with σαπρὰ, it also serves to draw attention away from the parable towards the application – clearly this is about something beyond fish. The "putting outside" also underlines that the bad fish are not useful.[881]

A third element is in the application of the parable: the words οὕτως ἔσται clearly reflect a close parallel between what has been said already about the net and what is about to be revealed about the judgement. On that day, the angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous (13:49). The Greek ἀφορισοῦσι literally

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more appropriate in that it is more inclusive than the masculine and would be in agreement with the neuter παντὸς γένους – "all kind" which is used here.

[879] See above on Gehenna (Part I); also Lk. 13:28; Mt. 8:12.

[880] Lk. 13:28; Mt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30.

[881] It is not clear what the fishermen would do with the "bad" fish. Beare, 315, suggests that maybe they would be thrown back into the water or possibly buried as a fertilizer. The former is unlikely since it would take considerable time; the latter is not hinted at in the parable. To bury the fish would take time and effort, and it would take a large amount of "bad" fish to be worth the hassle. There is an obvious contrast in Matthew's language. The good fish are "collected" (συνέλεξαν) which recalls the gathering in of the wheat in the parable of the Tares and denotes careful selection for a purpose. The bad fish are "left" or "thrown outside". Most likely, the bad fish would simply be left on the beach to be eaten by birds, cats or whatever. For Matthew, important is that they are not useful and not to be found with the good anymore.

means "to remove".[882] The verb is used in conjunction with the preposition ἐκ, which implies that the angels remove the wicked *from the midst* of the righteous rather than simply separate the two. This is compatible with the idea that the net represents the kingdom. It also underlines that the wicked can offer no good to the righteous but instead are a possible source of contamination. In this respect the earlier contrast between σαπρὰ and καλὰ becomes all the more relevant. That which is "decaying" can corrupt that which is good.

These three elements reflect the type of judgement anticipated. The language is not compatible with images of a hell that burns without end. Rather, they depict the judgement not as a vindictive process but as an attempt to purify the kingdom from the corrupting influence of evil. This is clearly brought out by the use of σαπρὰ as well as the verb ἀφοριοῦσι and the phrase ἔξω ἔβαλλον. The fact that these are redactional suggests that Matthew has deliberately strengthened an emphasis that is already present in the text.[883] These observations are in line with the two concluding phrases that have already been discussed in the section on the parable of the Wheat and Tares.

The first is that the wicked will be put in the "furnace of fire". We have already discussed this phrase as an allusion to Daniel 3:6 (the account of the three Jewish boys). But as in the case of the parable of the Tares, the account finds an application here in a reverse fashion. In Daniel the three boys are condemned by the king of Babylon to be burned in the furnace of fire because their allegiance to God has led them to disobey the king. In the parable, those represented by the "bad" fish receive the same sentence because there is no excuse for their failure to heed the call of the gospel. Thus, while the three boys were saved from the furnace, the villains of the parable will not.

The closing phrase about the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" is an appendix which ties this parable to other parables/sayings we have been looking at and reinforces the idea that the major punishment of the wicked is not some prolonged torment, but rather that they have lost the kingdom and been removed from the midst of the righteous. It functions in a similar way as in the parable of the Wheat and Tares.

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[882] Liddell and Scott, 285.
[883] An everlasting hell is not brought out comfortably in a parable about bad fish.

We can conclude, therefore, that in its present form there is a close relation between the parable and the application brought about by such redactional terms as σαπρὰ and ἔξω ἔβαλλον. These, together with the quotation from Daniel 3:6 and the reference to the weeping and gnashing of teeth, mark a deliberate attempt to tie this brief parable first with that of the Wheat and Tares which uses similar language, and on a broader level, with other passages in Matthew that concern the judgement. The language of the parable is not intended to be a picture of hell; rather, the use of analogies from the fishing trade and the story of the three Jewish boys at the court of Nebuchadnezzar and related passages within Matthew suggest that Matthew had in mind the removal of the wicked from the kingdom of God not in a vindictive manner but as an attempt to clear the kingdom through the destruction of their polluting influence.

Chapter XVIII

Matthew 22:1-14

> "[11]But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment; [12]and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. [13]Then the king said to the attendants, 'bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' [14]For many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt. 22:11-14).

The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" next appears in Matthew 22:13 in the closing remarks to the parable of the Great Supper (Mt. 22:1-14). The parable comes in two parts. The first is about the invitation to the Great Supper that goes out to different people some of whom accept and some reject. The second part is about the man present in the supper without a wedding garment. The first part also appears is Luke 14:16-23 in similar format.[884] The second is unique to Matthew. Here I initially discuss the first part of the parable in its Matthean and Lukan forms, underlining differences in order to determine possible redactional purposes in the way each preserves the parable. Then I consider the second part and how its relation to the first helps bear out the meaning of the "weeping and gnashing of teeth".

The outline of the parable in Matthew is as follows. A king prepares a feast for his son's wedding. At the appointed time, he sends out his servants to bring in those who have been invited (22:2). It was customary in Palestine for the hosts of a feast to send out two invitations. The first was a formal invitation to the wedding feast; the second was a notification to those who had already been invited and had accepted the invitation that the feast was ready and they should come.[885] The invitation of 22:2 is the second invitation since the servants go to bring those already invited.[886]

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[884] The format is similar and could posit a common source though the verbal agreement is small. It is generally assigned to Q. See Hagner, 626-32; Kloppenborg, *Parallels*, 164.
[885] Keener, 85.
[886] καλέσαι τοὺς κεκλημένους – "call the invited ones".

Those invited, however, refuse to attend (22:3). Offended, the king sends yet another call[887] but the response of the invitees is even worse.[888] Some are indifferent others turn against the king's messengers and kill them (22:4-7). The king responds violently. He sends his army, kills those who refused the invitation and destroys their city (22:7). Now that the feast is ready but without anyone to participate in it, the king sends his servants yet again, this time to invite anyone they can find (22:8-9). "And so, the place was filled".

In its current format, the parable is an allegory about the rejection of Israel. It is preceded by two parables that condemn Israel for her refusal to believe. In the first, the parable of the Two Sons (21:23-32), the Jewish leadership is condemned because they have failed to believe in John the Baptist though his was a "way of righteousness" (21:32). In the second, the parable of the Evil Tenants (21:33-45), the Jewish leadership is compared to a group of farmers to whom a vineyard has been entrusted. Instead of giving to the owner his due, they mistreat his messengers and even kill his only son. The application of this parable to Israel is evident in the concluding remarks of 21:43: "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it." The point is not missed, for according to Matthew the chief priests and the Pharisees, on hearing these parables, perceived that Jesus was speaking about them and wanted to arrest him (22:46).

The parable of the Great Supper develops the same theme. At the conclusion of the parable in a clear reference to Israel is the remark that though many are called, few are chosen[889] (22:14). This again prompts the Pharisees to action this time in the form of an unusual alliance with the Herodians in order to trap Jesus (22:15). Gundry pointedly remarks that in these three pericopes that dwell on Israel's refusal to believe and her subsequent rejection there is a chronological sequence: first, they are guilty of rejecting John the Baptist; second, they reject Jesus (the vineyard owner's son); third, they reject the ministry of the apostles.[890]

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[887] The language here, as Luz, *Matthäus*, 3:232, notes, corresponds to Mt. 21:34,36.

[888] Wedding feasts would last several days and guests were expected to stay for its duration. In an agricultural community, this could be a substantial demand on peasants who might have flocks and land to tend. At the same time, to be invited to a feast was a substantial honour, especially if the invitation came from the king himself; to refuse the invitation would mean to invite the wrath of the king. See Keener, 86.

[889] Gr. ἐκλεκτοί used in the singular in the LXX consistently of Israel.

[890] Gundry, *Matthew*, 432. Cf. Scott, 162.

The allegorical application of the parable is evident in the manner in which the scenario unfolds. First, Matthew introduces the parable as one about the kingdom of heaven (22:2). Keener notes that it was customary for the rabbis to depict the messianic kingdom as a great wedding feast.[891] The king therefore who prepares the feast and sends out the invitation is clearly God. The bridegroom is the Messiah, again a common motif.[892]

Second, for the invitees to refuse an invitation from the king would be unlikely but possible (and in this instance, necessary for the purpose of the parable); for them to kill the king's representatives would be highly unlikely and constitute a direct act of rebellion. In the parable, the attitude of the invitees towards the king and his invitation is not so much one of open rebellion but rather one of indifference,[893] in which case the killing of the servants is an intentional exaggeration to emphasize the allegorical interpretation. As Strauss pointed out,[894] it represents the killing of God's messengers, be they the prophets of old, as in the parable of the Evil Tenants, or the apostles, as is the case here.[895] The killing of the king's messengers does echo the killing of the master's servants in the parable of the Evil Tenants[896] and also the words of condemnation recorded in 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you!" [897]

Third, when the king learns of the fate of his servants, he sends his army on a military campaign against them, while, in the meantime, the dinner is getting cold. To

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[891] Keener, 86.

[892] Mt. 9:15; 25:1; John 3:29; Eph 5:25-32; Rev 21:2-9; 2 Bar. 29:4; 2 En. 42:5; *b. Pesah* 119b; SE 1 En. 62:14; 1 QSa. Cf. Ps. 107:1-9; Is. 25:6-8.

[893] The attitude of indifference is indicated by the use of the word ἀμελήσαντες which indicates, as Gundry, *Matthew*, 432, notes, that they didn't even bother to give an excuse, something they do in Luke 14:18-20.

[894] Srauss, 354.

[895] There are a number of parallels between the parable of the Great Supper and that of the Evil Tenants. To the keepers of the vineyard the vineyard was entrusted, to the invitees the invitation to the feast. The former failed to deliver the produce, the latter to attend. The former kill the servants of the owner who come to request his due share, the latter the messengers who come to inform them that the feast is ready. The former will, in turn, be killed because of their insolence the latter already suffer death before the parable is over. The vineyard will be given to another "people" as the invitation already goes out to others. Those parallels leave no doubt that the theme is the same.

[896] The sending out of the servants in the two parables is described with the same phrase - ἀπέστειλε τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ (22:3; 21:34). When the second group of servants is sent, the two parables again agree verbatim – πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν ἄλλους δούλους (21:36; 22:4). The sending of the servants in both parables represents the sending and eventual rejection of the messengers of God, be they the prophets or apostles. Hagner, 626-32, correctly notes the strong eschatological element in the detailed description of the preparation of the feast.

[897] The parallels between these passages are obvious even from the variants of λιθοβολέω used in 23:37 and 21:35 to describe the manner in which Jerusalem and the evil Tenants respectively put to death the messengers sent to them.

send in the army against a rebellious town would be normal, but for a refused invitation seems a harsh response.[898] It is justified only by the fact that the invitees have killed the king's messengers in which case one implausible act on the part of the invitees, calls forth a second implausible act, this time from the king. The king's armies destroy those who refused the invitation and burn their city, an act that again echos the preceeding parables on the rejection of Israel.[899]

The parable has an eschatological setting, perhaps the end of the world. The king who is God and acts as a judge, the wedding feast which represents the messianic banquet, the servants who call on the invitees to come and receive the honor they were supposed to have been waiting and preparing for all along – all point towards a climax in human affairs. The destruction of the city and the killing of those originally invited clearly depict the destruction of Jerusalem[900] while those brought in at the last moment are clearly the Gentiles who respond to the gospel. The destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age are also closely knit in Matthew 24:1-51 which suggests that either Matthew saw in the destruction of Jerusalem a type of the end of the age, or else that the destruction of the Holy City could but announce that the end of the age is just around the corner.

The punishment in this parable is stronger than in the preceding two. The parable of the Two Sons concludes with the warning that the "tax collectors and the harlots" will go into the kingdom before "the chief priests and the elders" of the people (21:23,32) – clearly there is still hope for them. The parable of the Evil Tenants does not provide the punishment. Rather, it concludes with a question as to the fate the unworthy tenants deserve to which the audience replies: κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς – "he will put those wretches to a miserable death" (22:41). In a sense, Matthew has the Jewish leadership pronounce sentence on themselves. In the parable of the Great Supper, the language is more direct and confirms the punishment pronounced in the previous one as is evident by the use of the verb ἀπόλλυμι in 22:41 and 22:7. The king "destroyed [ἀπώλεσε] those murderers and burned their city" (22:7).

The parable also appears in Luke 14:16-23 and follows a similar pattern. A call is sent out to those initially invited and is refused. A second call is sent out and

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[898] See Fenton, 347.
[899] Strauss, 354.
[900] See, Luz, *Matthäus*, 3:242.

this is also refused. In his anger, the master of the supper now extends the invitation to anyone his servants can find in order that the banquet hall might be filled.

There are, however, a number of differences in Luke. The one sending out the invitation is not a king but "a certain man", ἄνθυωπός τις (Lk. 14:16). The meal likewise is not a wedding feast but a great supper (14:16). Both Matthew and Luke record the refusal of the invitees to attend. Matthew does so in a brief manner – some went to their fields others about their business. Luke records more detailed responses. One bought a field and wanted to go out and see it (Lk. 14:18), another bought a pair of oxen and wanted to try them (14:19), a third was newly married and wanted to be left alone (Lk. 14:20).[901] In Matthew the invitees actually kill the messengers who bring the invitation while in Luke they simply refuse to attend and no violence is involved.

Both record that the king/master of the house was angry at the refusal and in both the invitation is now extended to others. [902] Matthew is briefer in that this new invitation is given to anyone the servants could find, while Luke names them as the poor, the maimed, the blind and the lame.[903] Luke concludes that those who rejected the original invitation will not enter the feast, while in Matthew the king sends his troops to kill them and raze their city to the ground.

The differences reveal the editorial intention of the two evangelists. The absence of the key elements of king, messianic banquet, violence on the part of the invitees and violence on the part of the king means that for Luke the parable is not primarily a parable of judgement against Israel. Such a notion does enter the fray, but not in the manner it does in Matthew.[904]

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[901] Schweizer, *Luke*, 238.

[902] Luke actually records three invitations. The first goes to those originally invited and is turned down (Lk. 14:18-20). The second goes to the poor, the maimed, blind and the lame "of the town" (14:21). As there is still room the king sends his servants out again, this time to invite all they meet in the in the roads and country hedges (14:23). Jeremias sees in this threefold invitation God's call first to the leaders of the Jewish nation. When they refuse, the invitation goes to the "publicans and sinners" of Israel, while the third invitation to those in the countryside might represent the coming of the Gentiles. Matthew only has a double invitation, but the Gentiles are clearly included in the second invitation as the context suggests. (See Jeremias, *Parables*, 64.)

[903] Possibly redactional; Schweizer, *Luke*, 238.

[904] The indirect condemnation on Jewish leadership is evident in at least two points. First, insofar that the parable casts in a negative shadow the social habits of the Pharisees, it also indirectly condemns the establishment they represent. Second, the fact that the invitation goes to the "social outcasts" of the day, also implies that the established order is about to be overturned.

In Luke the parable is less an attack on Israel and more a social commentary on the customs of the Pharisees.[905] The parable is as such told in the context of a meal (Lk. 14:1) and is preceded by a brief exposition about meal customs (LK. 14:2-14). Jesus addresses his host and suggests that when preparing a feast he should not invite the rich from whom he can expect a reward, but rather those who are in true need. These he names as "the poor the maimed the blind and the lame" (Lk. 14:13), exactly the same group of people the master in the parable of the Great Supper invites to his feast when the original invitees refuse to attend. The social orientation of Luke explains his choice to dwell, in contrast to Matthew's briefness, both on the excuses of those invited and on the specific classes of people invited at the end.

In both cases, therefore, the redactional purpose of the evangelist has determined the nature of the details to be included. Matthew uses the parable as a polemic against the Jewish leadership, gives it a clear eschatological base and places it within a broader context of attack on Jewish leadership. Luke uses it to conclude a discourse on exclusive and elitist social table customs and has placed it within the context of a meal and a like themed discussion.

At the conclusion of the parable of the Great Supper, Matthew introduces the part about the wedding garment, which is unique to him.[906] As the guests are gathered, the king comes to inspect them and finds a man without a wedding garment, something that is clearly unacceptable.[907] The man has nothing to say in his defence. The king then commands the servants to bind him hand and feet[908] and throw him into the darkness outside where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth".

In this second part of the parable the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" appears in conjunction with the "outer darkness". The combination of the two has already been discussed in the section on Matthew 8:12. It always involves an evening feast

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[905] Scott, 163.

[906] See Fenton, 349, for a possible relationship to a rabbinic parable.

[907] The traditional interpretation proposed by Augustine that it was the duty of the king to provide a garment and thus the guest was inexcusable, is appealing but lacks first century evidence to substantiate it. An alternative interpretation that the garments had to be clean (Keener, 86) does not seem to do full justice to the phrase ἔνδυμα γάμου, which suggests a special garment for the occasion. Strauss, 355, wondered how poor people just called off the stree to attend could be expected to have the proper wedding attire. In light of the lack of decisive evidence, it may be best to leave the question of the nature of his offense unanswered. It will suffice to state with Carson, 457, that the guest knew he was in the wrong by the fact that he could not answer to the king (22:11), and as such, there was no excuse for his lack of appropriate attire.

[908] Gundry, *Matthew*, 440, notes that the "binding" connects this saying to the "binding" of the Tares in the relevant parable. He also suggests that the διακόνοις of 22:13 is a reference to angels again in similar fashion to the angels of the parable of the Tares, who separate the wheat from the Tares.

from which somebody is excluded. This exclusion is what relegation to the outer darkness actually is.

In this regard, it is worth comparing the fate of the man without the wedding garment with the fate of the invitees who refused to attend. Naturally, such a comparison entails a danger, for it is not altogether clear that the two parts of the parable originally appeared together.[909] Nonetheless, even if they did not, in their present format they appear together. Insofar that the final editor considered the appended incident a fitting conclusion to the parable, a comparison between the punishment of the man without the garment over and against that of the ones who refused to attend the wedding would be legitimate in the eyes of the editor and the intended audience. Indeed, the incident of the man without the garment takes place in the very wedding banquet the invitees refused to attend – a detail intended to give an appearance of cohesion between the two parts and thus an insight into the fate of the respective villain/villains.

In comparing the fate of the two, it is important to remember that the main villains in the parable are those who refused to attend the feast altogether. With the parable set within the context of the last week before Jesus' crucifixion, and since in them Matthew sees the leaders of the Jews, clearly then the invitees are not guilty of rejecting a simple invitation to any king's feast, but of rejecting the call of God to salvation and of putting to death his son. Their guilt is the greater because they are the ones originally invited and presumably should have known how to respond.

In contrast, the sin of the man who did not have proper attire is clearly the lesser both in the imagery of the parable and the interpretation. In the parable, the original invitees refused to attend thus outrightly insulting the king. In contrast, he attended but was negligent about his attire. In the interpretation, the first group represents the religious leaders of Israel; they should have known better. The man is one of those called in to fill the empty spaces – a publican, a sinner, possibly a Gentile. He is also without excuse but his guilt is not as great as that of the invitees. It seems that in this parable Matthew condemns the Jewish leadership and welcomes the outcasts who have been brought into the kingdom, but hastens to add that those who were out but have now entered should watch for they might also be cast out.[910]

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[909] The majority of commentators see the second part as an independent unit appended by Matthew. See, Jeremias, *Parables*, 64; Scott, 162.
[910] Gundry, *Matthew*, 440.

In this sense, the invitees who refused to attend and bear the greater guilt are put to death; the man without the garment who bears the lesser guilt is thrown outside the banqueting hall. What will he do there? He may weep for losing the kingdom just as he seemed to have gained it; gnash his teeth in anger at the king who ordered him out; perhaps return to his former state of being lost and dispossessed. To suggest that either the phrases "weeping and gnashing of teeth" or "outer darkness" are depictions of hell's sufferings would be a gross misapplication of the imagery involved. It would also imply a much more terrible fate to the less guilty than the one meted to the true villains who have rejected the king's grace.

The parable concludes with the following words: "For many are invited, but few are chosen" (22:14).[911] These words only reinforce the idea we have already seen developing in the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" texts, namely, that the sadness of the fate of those disinherited lies in what they have lost more so than in what they are suffering. Thus, the invitees who have refused to attend and have lost their life are mourned for losing the chance to attend such an event, rather than for loosing their life; and the same is the case with the man without the garment who came so close and yet ended up outside.

In summary, a clear purpose is evident in Matthew in the use of the parable of the Great Supper and the appended incident of the man without the wedding garment. Luke constructs the parable as a negative commentary on exclusive social customs. In Matthew, by contrast, it is the third of three parables that castigate Israel and the religious leadership in increasingly strong language. In this setting, the incident of the man without the wedding garment appears almost as an afterthought. While in the three parables he pronounces judgement on unrepentant Israel for having rejected the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, and now the apostles, Matthew includes the appended incident as a warning to Christian leaders that they also stand in danger of failing to live up to the call of the kingdom and might find themselves expelled. The weight of the parables, however, is clearly on Israel and this is substantiated by the type of punishment meted out – the villains of the three parables are slain and their city destroyed, while the man without the garment is expelled from the joy of the kingdom. In this context, the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" is not a description of

[911] Cf. 2Esdr. 8:1,3,55; 9:15; 2 Bar. 44:15.

hell, but disappointment or despair "caused by a salvation forfeited by one's own fault", as Jeremias aptly put it.[912]

[912] Jeremias, *Parables*, 105.

Chapter XIX

Matthew 24:45-51

> "[48]But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' [49]and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with the drunken, [50]the master of the servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, [51]and will punish him [Gr. Literally "cut him in two"], and put him with the hypocrites; there men will weep and gnash their teeth" (Mt. 24:48-51).

We now turn to Matthew 24:45-51, the parable of the Unfaithful Servant, which is concluded by the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (24:51). This passage is part of the fifth major discourse of Jesus in Matthew that spans from 24:1 to 25:46. Matthew 24 has attracted considerable attention as it contains the lengthiest eschatological discourse in the gospels with close affinities to Mark 13 and Luke 21.[913] A discussion of the main elements of chapter 24 is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, I concentrate on the parable and specifically on the bearing it has on the question of punishment, and comment on the broader context only in the instances it might help clarify the parable's meaning.

The parable appears in similar form in Luke 12:39-46 with a high degree of verbal agreement with Matthew.[914] In both gospels, the parable of the Unfaithful Servant follows the saying about the Lord coming as a thief unexpectedly.[915] This might suggest, as Beare holds,[916] that the two pericopes were already grouped together in Q.[917] In both instances, the parable is addressed to the disciples as overseers[918] of the believers, a point to which I return below. Jeremias has suggested that the parable was originally addressed to the scribes as overseers of the spiritual heritage of the Hebrew scriptures.[919] This would be plausible since the parable is

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[913] For an overview and critique of the history of interpretation see Beasley-Murray, *Future,* Wenham "Mark 13," 19.
[914] The verbal agreement is 86% based on the text of Luke, which places it in the ten Q pericopes with the closest verbal agreement between Matthew and Luke. See Kloppenborg, *Q*, 63, *Parallels*, 140.
[915] Mt. 24:42-44; Lk. 12:39-40.
[916] Beare, 476.
[917] Cf. Kloppenborg, *Q*, 59,138.
[918] Dodd, 151ff, notes that the word is used to refer to persons with a sacred mission – religious leaders, rulers, prophets, apostles.
[919] Jeremias, *Parables*, 58.

broad enough to include such a meaning. Nonetheless, the context in which Matthew and Luke preserve it, testifies against Jeremias. In Matthew it forms part of the eschatological discourse which focuses on the coming of the Son of Man in glory, and which is specifically addressed to the disciples alone.[920] In Luke, it is introduced by Peter's question, "Lord, are you telling this... for us, or for all?" While Jesus does not answer directly, the parable is clearly addressed to the disciples since when the parable is finished Jesus turns to speak "also... to the multitudes".[921]

The parable in both gospels is set against the anticipation of the coming of the Son of Man.[922] In Matthew this is evident in the fact that it appears at the close of the long discourse about the end of the age (24:1-25:46),[923] in Luke by a number of factors, like the call to be ready for the coming of the master (12:35-38) and the comparison of his coming to the coming of a thief in the night (12:39-40). Indeed, in both gospels the parable is preceded by the words, "You also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Mt. 24:44; Lk. 12:40). It is evident, therefore, that the parable in Matthew and Luke calls Christian overseers to be diligent in their work as they anticipate the Lord's coming.

According to the parable in Matthew, a master appoints a servant in his household to oversee the fellow servants while he goes away – clearly an appointment of honour (24:45). The servant is pronounced "blessed" if, when the master returns, he finds him taking care of the household properly as directed (24:46). He will gain his master's favour and be appointed to even greater, more honourable responsibilities (24:47). If, however, the servant mistreats his fellow servants and leads a life of excess, upon returning the master will punish him accordingly (24:48-50).[924]

Of interest to this study is the punishment that the wicked servant will receive if not found faithful. This in Matthew is described in three phrases (24:51): on returning the master will (a) "cut him in two";[925] (b) give him the share of the

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[920] Mt. 24:1, 3. The Greek κατ' ἰδίαν of 24:3 indicates that this is a private discussion in which Jesus is about to reveal something not yet fit for the multitudes to hear.

[921] Lk. 12:54 (Ἔλεγε δὲ καὶ τοῖς ὄχλοις) where the conjunction καὶ implies that the group initially addressed (disciples) is now broadened to include the crowds.

[922] Scott, 209.

[923] In Mt. 24:1-51 two themes are closely interwoven: the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age. The nature of the relationship between the two has been problematic. For a brief discussion see Carson, 510-11. The parable of the Unfaithful Servant clearly envisages the end of the age since it depicts the master returning unexpectedly.

[924] Fenton, 394.

[925] διχοτομέω (Liddell and Scott, 439).

hypocrites (ὑποκριτῶν); and (c) the servant will share in the "weeping and gnashing of teeth". Luke contains (a) in the same form, while for (b) he places the fate of the servant with the "unfaithful" (ἀπίστων) rather than the "hypocrites" (ὑποκριτῶν). Luke does not have (c), Matthew's statement about the "weeping and gnashing of teeth", but has his own conclusion according to which the punishment meted for the unfaithfulness is proportional to the degree to which the servant was aware of the master's will.[926]

Matthew's statement that the master will cut the servant in two is unique in the gospels, apart from the parallel in Luke 12:46. F. Filson sees in it a figurative expression for "severe and irrevocable punishment",[927] an approach that is paralleled by the RSV, which softens the impact by translating the Greek verb with the rather vague "punish". Jeremias finds in διχοτομέω a mistranslated Aramaic, the verb פלג, that was intended to mean "he will apportion to him". This construction would be in harmony with the second phrase about the servant being appointed with the hypocrites.[928] Such an approach aims to explain the apparent contradiction of a slain servant being apportioned the fate of the hypocrites. O. Betz sees behind διχοτομέω the Aramaic rendered "to cut" which would imply the cutting off of the unfaithful servant from the people of God. It is a cutting off of the type Ananias and Sapphira or Judas suffered and precedes the eschatological torment to be meted in the day of judgement.[929]

Jeremias' and Betz's attempts of trying to determine the Aramaic behind the Greek are weak. Their proposed constructions are hypothetical and the purported original meaning is substantially different from the Greek used. Their approach therefore is based more on convenience than on a clear indication from the text. Also, since διχοτομέω occurs at the point of the master's return (i.e. the parousia), Betz's attempted parallel to Judas, or Ananias and Sapphira is strained.

Benoit finds διχοτομέω too harsh and interprets it metaphorically to mean, in agreement with Betz, "he will separate him" (from the rest of the servants).[930] He

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[926] Lk. 12:47, 48a: "And the servant who knew his master's will, but did not make ready or act according to his will, shall receive a severe beating [δαρήσεται πολλάς]. But he who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, shall receive a light beating [δαρήσεται ὀλίγας]."
[927] Filson, 261.
[928] Jeremias, *Parables*, 56.
[929] Betz, "Servant," 43-58; he appeals to 1QapGen 19:15-16.
[930] Benoit, 152.

finds a parallel in the Qumran scrolls where it is said that God will cut off the evil: "may God segregate him for evil, and may he be cut off from the midst of all the sons of life".[931] As Carson, however, notes, the text from Qumran concerns excommunication rather than the final punishment.[932]

Gundry, taking a different approach, suggests that the very violence of the death of the servant in this life launches him into a similarly severe punishment in the afterlife.[933] For Gundry, the severity of the punishment would represent eternal torment,[934] something quite the opposite from the swift and final result of διχοτομέω. Perhaps Carson is closest to the mark when he suggests that διχοτομέω reflects the punishment accorded to Jewish slaves and cites Susanna 55 as an example where Daniel pronounces a similar fate at the hand of an angel of God for a false witness.[935]

The Greek verb should probably be understood in its most natural sense. The violence of it should not immediately put us off. As noted above, διχοτομέω plausibly reflects a type of punishment used on slaves. More importantly, similar language in other parables of warning suggests it was not offensive to ancient sensitivities. Note, for example, the language of the Great Supper: "he [the king] sent his army and destroyed [ἀπώλεσε] those murderers [φονεῖς] and burned [ἐνέπρησε] their city" (Mt. 22:7). In the Evil Tenants the conclusion is nearly as violent. "He [the owner of the vineyard] will put those wretches [κακοὺς] to a miserable death [κακῶς ἀπολέσει]" (Mt. 21:41). While there is no direct linguistic similarity between the punishment of the parable of the Unfaithful Servant and the two cited above, the common denominator is the violence of the language which is not rare in Matthew, and perhaps not as offensive to ancient ears as it is to modern.

Perhaps a better insight into the reason for the use of a verb as strong διχοτομέω can be gained by looking at the second clause Matthew uses to describe the fate of the bad servant – he will be assigned a place with the hypocrites. In the place of "hypocrites" Luke has "unfaithful". The noun "hypocrite" in the singular is

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[931] 1QS 2:16, translation of Garcia-Martinez, 5. Other relevant texts are Mt. 18:17; Ps. 37:9,22; 1QS 6:24-25; 7:1-2,16; 8:21-24.
[932] Carson, 511.
[933] Gundry, *Matthew*, 497.
[934] Gundry, *Matthew*, 17.
[935] Carson, 511. He additionally mentions Heb. 11:37 and 1 Sam. 15:33. Cf. Hendriksen, 873.

used once by Matthew 7:5, a Q text,[936] not at all by Mark and twice by Luke, in 6:42 which is a parallel saying to Matthew 7:5 and in an independent Lukan text in 13:15. The Q text is advice by Jesus to anybody who wants to remove a "speck" from another person's eye to first remove the "plank" from his own eye. Luke 13:15 is directed against the head of a synagogue who complained when Jesus performed a healing on the Sabbath. In these instances the word is used to characterize hypocritical behavior in everyday situations.

The use of the plural "hypocrites" is more revealing. It is used thirteen times by Matthew, once by Mark and twice by Luke (both times in Q texts).[937] With the possible exception of Luke 12:56, each of these texts is a commentary on the spiritual attitude of the Jewish leaders, primarily the Pharisees.[938] Evidently, here we have a tradition present in Mk, Q and M of associating the Pharisees with hypocrisy. While Mark and Luke are aware of it, Matthew takes hold of it and uses it to an impressive extent in contrast to the singular which he uses only once. This suggests that for Matthew "hypocrites" has almost become a synonym for "Pharisees". This is most obviously apparent in Matthew 23:13-33 in the famous series of woes in which the Pharisees are called "hypocrites" no less than six times (seven if 23:14 is included) within the space of seventeen verses.

Such use may suggest that the "hypocrites" of 24:51 is an editorial adjustment of Matthew in place of Luke's "unfaithful".[939] The reason for this would be obvious – Matthew wants to draw a parallel between an unworthy minister of the gospel and the Pharisees. The unfaithful servant has been entrusted with the task of looking after his fellow servants and the chores of the household so that when the master returns everything will be in proper order. If the servant fails to live up to his call, then the coming of the master will be an unpleasant surprise and will result in his punishment. Likewise, the Pharisees in parables such as that of the Evil Tenants or the Great Supper, had been entrusted with the care of Israel to look after her and bring forth fruit in the former, or simply be ready to enter the messianic feast in the latter. The

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[936] Kloppenborg, *Q*, 65,67,89.

[937] Mk. 7:6; Lk, 11:44; 12:56; Mt. 6:2,5; 15:7; 22:18; 23:13,(14),15,23,25,27,29; 24:51. Of these, 23:14 is not included in the critical text but NA have it in their apparatus. Cf. Kloppenborg, *Q*, 84,392.

[938] In Luke 12:56 Jesus uncovers the hypocrisy of the Jews who can read the sings in nature about the weather, but have failed to see the signs of the times are fulfilled in His ministry. As such, there is still an indirect condemnation of the spiritual leadership of Israel who have failed to prepare the people accordingly.

[939] C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 537, notes that ἄπιστος is very rare in the LXX and elsewhere in the gospels it appears only in Mark 9:19 and its parallels. Here it is probably traditional.

fact that they have failed is obvious, since the "master" (Jesus) has come and they are not ready for him.

There is however a difference. The failure of the Pharisees is taken for granted and the parables like the two mentioned above aim to bring them to repentance, or at least to reveal their true spiritual state.[940] In the parable of the Unfaithful Servant the option for success or failure is left open. The setting is future. If the servant does as the master has told him then he will be appointed to even greater and more honorable responsibilities. If the servant fails then he has become like the Pharisees and will be assigned a place with them, with the hypocrites. In this respect, the parable in its Matthean form is a clear warning to Christian leaders not to imitate the Pharisees in their unprepardness to meet their master.

In such a context, it is easier to understand the strong connotations of the verb διχοτομέω. In the parable of the Evil Tenants the master will slay the wicked farmers. In the parable of the Great Supper the king sends his army to destroy the city of those who have refused his invitation and kill them. Should the servant who has been with Jesus and has seen his glory, fare better if he goes about his appointed task with equal hypocritical and self-centered indifference as the Pharisees have? The relationship therefore, between the verb διχοτομέω and the following phrase about the unfaithful servant being assigned a place with the hypocrites is not strained. The two rather complement each other and together draw a parallel between the fate of the Pharisees and the Christian leaders who prove unfaithful.

We pause here to see how the punishment envisaged in the parable compares with other trends in the context of the fifth major discourse of Jesus in Matthew (24:1-25:46). The return of the Son of Man is compared to one of the great events from biblical tradition, the Flood (24:37-41). The Flood came unexpectedly upon the inhabitants of the earth (but not on Noah and his family) and took away (ἦρεν ἅπαντας) all those outside the ark (24:39). They all perished. The coming of the Son of Man will be like the Flood (οὕτως ἔσται) (24:37); not only in that it will come unexpectedly, but that it also "take away" some and leave others (24:40-41).

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[940] Cf. the conclusion of the parable of the Evil Tenants that concludes with a question phrased in such a way that when the Pharisees answer it, without realizing it they pass judgement on themselves (21:40-41). When they do realize that the parable exposes their failure, rather than repent, they seek to kill Jesus (21:42-45), thus further underlying the failure of their spiritual leadership.

The parable concludes with the idea that it is there that will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth". What is the relationship of this phrase with the preceding two pictures of punishment? Gundry, as already noted, sees a chronological relationship in which the διχοτομέω takes place on a temporal level and launches the wicked servant into a fate similar to those of the hypocrites in the afterlife. It is in the afterlife that the weeping and gnashing of teeth takes place.[941] Such a sequence is unlikely. The parable is set at the conclusion of the eschatological discourse on the return of the Son of Man; within the parable, the punishment of the wicked servant is placed at the return of the master that undoubtedly parallels the return of the Son of Man of the broader context. The notion, therefore, that the servant receives a temporal death sentence at the return of the master only to come back to life to be sentenced to prolonged torment is difficult to maintain.

The parable could probably end coherently with the assigning of the servant with the hypocrites. The weeping and gnashing of teeth is not intended to add something to the meaning of the parable, but rather is an editorial comment that brings together what has been said and, more importantly, ties this parable with others that have been colored with a similar ending.

We have already seen from previous occurrences of the phrase that the weeping represents the sadness for the loss of the kingdom and the gnashing of teeth anger at the master for excluding those who are excluded. Insofar that the phrase is not an integral part of the parable but has been furnished as a standard conclusion suggests that it simply retains its meaning from other contexts where it is used.

Interestingly, Matthew 24 has another reference to "weeping". In 24:30 the "tribes of the earth" weep[942] as they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Why they weep we are not specifically told. Maybe they realize that they will not enter the kingdom; maybe they fear the coming judgement.[943] 24:31 hints at the former since the nations see the angels of the Son of Man go to the corners of the earth and gather the elect while they are left behind.

As for the gnashing of the teeth, the response of the unfaithful servant is not unlike the response of the unfaithful in other parables of impending doom. The leaders of Israel gnash their teeth in anger because they see the Gentiles coming into

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[941] Gundry, *Matthew*, 497,517.

[942] κόψονται here κλαυθμὸς in 24:51.

[943] In Rev. 1:7 the tribes of the earth likewise weep at the parousia. Cf. Zech. 12:12.

the kingdom and dine with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, while they are left outside (Mt. 8:12). The man without the wedding garment gnashes his teeth because he was in and found himself thrown out (Mt. 22:13). The unfaithful servant gnashes his teeth for a number of reasons. His master's coming has cut short his flamboyant lifestyle and has terminated his authority; it has exposed him to the ridicule of his fellow servants; it leads to his exclusion from the master's household and also to his death. It also reinforces the picture of his corrupt character, for his anger shows a lack of repentance. He has failed to see his failure.

Last but not least, the addition of this conclusion to the parable underlines a theme that we found strongest in Luke 13:28 but which is also present in the instances the phrase appears in Matthew, namely, that the greatest tragedy of the day of judgement is not on the punishment inflicted, but on what has been lost. One cannot fail to see that the servant could have been a true leader in his master's household, responsible and respected by all. Yet his negligence and selfishness means that he loses everything his master would have been willing to bestow on him. He ends up sad and embittered, and eventually loses his life. This emphasis on the sadness of the loss draws attention away from the severity of the sentence pronounced. When all has been said and done, the life he could have had and lost is a sadder note than his sentence.

Chapter XX

Matthew 25:14-30

> [29]For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not even what he has will be taken away. [30]And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.

The last instance of the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth" in Matthew occurs in 25:30 at the conclusion of the parable of the Talents (25:14-30). The parable is the last of three parables arranged in sequence - the Unfaithful Servant (24:45-51), the Ten Virgins (25:1-13) and the Talents. All three revolve around the theme of preparing for the coming of the Son of Man. The three parables in turn form the centre of the fifth major discourse of Jesus in Matthew (24:1-25:46) which can be divided in three parts: (1) 24:1-44, an exposition on the signs of the coming of the Son of Man; (2) 24:45-25:30 the three parables of preparation; and (3) 25:31-46 a description of the last judgement.

The parable of the Talents comes from Q and corresponds to Luke 19:11-27.[944] It also has affinities with Mark 13:34.[945] In this chapter I first give a brief overview of the parable in Matthew and compare and contrast it with the Lukan version and the Mark logion. Second, I discuss the banquet setting and how this affects the language of punishment. Third, I consider the punishment in comparison to Luke and the Markan saying, as well as to the broader Matthean context. On the basis of the above I then proceed to determine the implications of the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" saying.

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[944] On the relationship between the two, see Luz, *Matthäus*, 3:495-6. Nolland, 910-19, suggests that Matthew more likely preserves the more authentic version insofar as the rebellion in the parable seems secondary as does the role of the servants being entrusted with money. The rebellion against the noble man hints that perhaps Luke has merged two separate parables. See Resenhöfft, 327–287; Crossan, *Parables*, 103.

[945] Kloppenborg, *Parallels*, 196-201. Mt. 25:29 (Lk. 16:26) seems to have been an independently circulating logion incorporated into the parable (see Mk. 4:25; Mt. 13:12; Lk. 8:18b; G. Thomas 41).

The parable of the Talents has affinities with Mark 13:34. In Mark a man goes away leaving his servants with authority over his household and asks the doorkeeper to be alert and ready for his return. The inference drawn in 13:35 is that the hearers of the parable should always be ready for they do not know whether the master will return in the evening, at midnight, or just before the rooster crows in the morning and they should not be found sleeping when he arrives.[946] Since the saying is placed in the conclusion of Mark's main eschatological discourse, the return of the Son of Man is envisaged. This is clear also from 13:32 that introduces the saying and declares that no one knows the day and the hour of the return of the Son of Man.

Luke, in contrast to Mark and Matthew, records the parable apart from the eschatological discourse. Nonetheless, it still appears as the gospel is reaching a climax of eschatological expectation. The parable follows the incident of Zaccheus (19:1-10), and is placed just prior to Jesus' final and triumphal entry into Jerusalem (19:28-40). It is told because, as Jesus was approaching Jerusalem, there were some who believed that the kingdom of God was about to be manifested (19:11). Luke contains a detail absent from either Matthew or Mark, namely, that the purpose of the man who went away, in Luke a noble man, was to receive a kingdom (19:12). The belief among some that the kingdom was about to be manifested coupled with the noble man going on a distant land to receive a kingdom strongly suggests that Luke intends it to be an allegory on the ascension of Jesus and the delay of the parousia.[947] Thus, Luke's emphasis is not so much a call to preparedness in anticipation of the unexpected return of the noble man, as it is a call to wise stewardship while the noble man is away (19:13).[948] Another detail absent from Mark and Matthew is that while the noble man was away, some inhabitants of the city rebelled against his authority.[949]

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[946] See Carson, 753. The verb βλέπετε (13:33) can be translated "be on guard" while the return of the master in 13:35 comes suddenly.

[947] Scott, 221, notes that the close connection of the parable and the incident with Zaccheus, as well as the anticipation among the crowds that Jesus' kingdom was about to be manifested, suggest that the aim of the parable is a warning that the kingdom will not be manifested immediately.

[948] This is clearly evident in the phrase, πραγματεύσασθε ἕως ἔρχομαι – "use the money entrusted wisely until I come". The noble man does not expect them so much to be in eager anticipation as to use what has been entrusted to them wisely. The substantial lapse of time is also envisaged in the mention of the rebellion (Lk. 19:14).

[949] The rebellion against the noble could reflect a historical incident. When Archelaus journeyed to Rome to get his kingship over Judea confirmed, a Jewish embassy of fifty persons also went to resist his appointment. On returning Archelaus took revenge on those who opposed his rule (Jos. *Ant.* XVII.8.1). See Jeremias, *Parables*, 59.

The return of the noble man after he has received the kingdom,[950] signals the return of the Son of Man in glory.

In both Mark and Luke, therefore, the parable is related to the parousia. The same is true also of Matthew. First, it is placed at the heart of the fifth major discourse that revolves around the parousia and the signs of its approach. Second, it is preceded by two parables that also emphasize this theme (25:1-13) and is followed by Matthew's judgement scene (25:31-46). A long delay is anticipated just as in Luke and as in the parable of the Ten Virgins that immediately precedes it. [951] Third, a banquet, though not specifically described, is clearly implied (see below) and this links it to other parables/sayings that compare the kingdom to a banquet.[952] Finally, the presence of the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" appended at the end connects the Talents with the five other occurrences of the phrase discussed already all of which envisage the end of the age. Clearly therefore, the parable of the Talents is told in anticipation of the judgement at the end of the age.

The outline of the parable is as follows. A man is about to leave for a long trip and before he does so, he calls together his servants and entrusts to them his property. He gives to one five talents, to the other two, to the third one, to each according to his abilities (25:14).[953] While the man is away, the first servant trades with his talents and gains another five (25:16,20). The second does the same and gains another two (25:17,21).[954] The third instead hides his talent in the ground and so gains no increase (25:18). When the man returns he calls his servants to account.[955] He congratulates

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[950] Compare e.g. with John 14:1-4 and 18:36 where Jesus declares that his kingdom is not of this world, but, presumably, a heavenly one. Cf. also Lk. 12:14 where Jesus refuses to act as a judge in a temporary matter.

[951] Mt. 25:1-12, especially 25:5. The long delay in turn indicates that in agreement with Luke and in contrast to Mark, the parable is concerned more with proper use of whatever is entrusted and only secondarily with the time of the return.

[952] Mt. 8:12, 22:13.

[953] In Luke he gives the ten servants one mina each. A talent was a monetary unit and could be gold, silver or bronze. The word ἀργύριον (Mt. 25:27) suggests silver. A talent was a much more substantial sum than Luke's mina. A mina was a hundred drachmas or the equivalent of a third of a year's wage. A talent was the equivalent of about six thousand denarii, or about twenty years' wages. See Carson, 516-7.

[954] The first two work diligently with their talents. This is evident in the use of the words εὐθέως ("immediately," "quickly"), πορευθεὶς ("proceeded"), εἰργάσατο ("worked"). See Gundry, *Matthew*, 504; UBS and Metzger, *ad loc.*

[955] The Greek συναίρει μετ' αὐτῶν λόγον is also used in Mt. 18:23. The master calls the servants to settle the accounts. As Hagner (735-6) points out the language points to the last judgement.

the first two in like language despite the greater gain of the first, insofar that both gained in relation to what had been entrusted to them (25:21,23).

The third however, is condemned because he did not work with what had been given to him in order to bring some gain. Had he been a good servant, even if he was not able to trade effectively with it he should have at least been wise enough to invest his talent in the bank and thus bring back interest. But he has not. In order to excuse his behaviour, the servant accuses the man of being a hard person (25:24-25). However, his words only make him look more guilty - if he considered his master to be hard he would all the more readily used constructively the talent entrusted to him in order to prevent the embarrassing situation that now confronts him. As such, the master commands two things: first, that the talent given to the unworthy servant be taken from him and given to the one with the five talents. The command is followed by the statement, "For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away"; second, that the unworthy servant be cast out to the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We have seen in previous discussions that the outer darkness always appears in conjunction with a banquet.[956] This is clearly the case in Matthew 8:12 in the saying about the banquet in the presence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and also in 22:13 in the parable of the Great Supper. This is the only time apart of the above two texts where the "outer darkness" appears. Is there a banquet in the parable of the Talents? At first sight, nothing is said about a banquet. A closer look, however, is more revealing. The master was away on a trip of a long duration. In contrast to the parable of the Unfaithful Servant where the return is unexpected and catches the servant unawares there is nothing unexpected about the return here. As noted above, the emphasis of the parable is on the use of that which has been entrusted and not the time of the return – the time element enters only in the sense of the absence being long. A banquet for the returning master would be the most natural expression for the joy of a long awaited reunion.[957]

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[956] See chapter XXV.

[957] See also Lk. 15:20-23 where a return, this time of the prodigal son, is also considered reason for celebration.

Furthermore, the encounter between the servants and the master does not take place at the moment the master arrives. There is a clear lapse of time. The first two faithful servants have had time to prepare their reports, fetch the talents they have gained and give account to the master. Even the unfaithful servant has had time to dig his talent from the place he hid it and thus present it to the master. He also has had, no doubt, plenty of time to repeatedly rehearse his excuse since it flows from his lips quite naturally and not as a last ditch attempt to avert the disaster that is coming upon him. In his words "here you have what is yours" the servant anticipates a positive reaction.

This setting where there is no time pressure makes a banquet most likely. The text actually indicates this. When the first two servants present their report, in each case the master replies with the words "*enter* into the *joy* of your master" (25:21, 23). The frequent comparison of the kingdom with a banquet indeed in the very parable that precedes the Talents indicates that a similar motif is envisaged here. In contrast, the unworthy servant is "thrown *outside*" (25:30). The development of the plot, therefore, calls us to observe the following chronological sequence: (a) the master returns at a certain point; (b) a short time lapses as a banquet is prepared and the servants prepare their reports; (c) just before the banquet the master listens to the reports. He congratulates the two and invites them to join the rejoicing of his return, while the unworthy one has no place in the master's "joy" or banquet.

Having considered the development of the parable, we are in a better position to look at the language of punishment. A comparison with the punishment in Luke brings out some noteworthy parallels and differences. As noted above, the punishment in Matthew consists of the unworthy servant (a) losing his one talent and of (b) being cast in the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke also records two different punishments meted out to different individuals/groups. The first punishment closely corresponds to Matthew's (a) – the one mina entrusted to the unworthy servant is taken from him and given to the servant who with his one mina won another ten. This act is followed by the same statement as in Matthew. Luke does not have (b) the statement about the weeping and gnashing of teeth. He does, however, as noted above, include a detail (absent from Matthew and Mark) about the inhabitants of the city rebelling against the master while he is

away. On this group the master also pronounces a sentence. He commands that they be brought before him and put to death. The unworthy servant is clearly the less guilty in comparison with the rebels and his punishment likewise is more lenient than the punishment meted to the rebels.

In Matthew the unworthy servant first loses his one talent and is then not allowed into the banquet but is rather thrown to the darkness outside where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The language therefore is first a language of exclusion in that he is not to partake of the banquet. The weeping and gnashing links this parable to similar statements elsewhere in Matthew where we have seen that the weeping and gnashing denote anger and sadness. It also links the parable of the Talents to that of the Unworthy Servant (24:45-51), which is the first of the three in this block of parables and has been discussed above. Indeed the two parables share a number of characteristics. Both involve a master who has gone away and entrusts his servants with responsibilities. Both explain how a good servant is expected to behave. Both give a warning as to what will happen/happens if and when the servant fails to live up to the call. Both are told with the parousia in mind, the first to instil a sense of anticipation the second to encourage proper behaviour in the light of the anticipation. Finally, both conclude with Matthew's favourite parable ending about the weeping and gnashing of teeth. In the first parable the unworthy servant shares the fate of the hypocrites/Pharisees by being slain. In the second his fate is not explicitly spelled out, but is similar that that in the first in that the servant is excluded from the kingdom.

The "outer darkness" therefore, as in the two other cases, is not a symbolic representation of hell. Nor is it a comparative construction that envisages different kinds of darkness with the servant being thrown into the darkest of all. It is simply a descriptive contrast to the lighted hall where the banquet is held. In the temporal setting of the parable it represents the dark night outside the lighted room, while in the meaning the parable has in the context of Matthew represents exclusion from the kingdom of God.

The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" clearly also carries over its meaning from its use in other contexts – weeping representing disappointment at being rejected, gnashing of teeth, anger at the master for the rejection. It is difficult not to

see a parallel between the reaction of the unfaithful servant here and the reaction of, say, the Jewish religious leaders in Matthew 8:12. The religious leaders considered themselves the children of the kingdom *par excellence*, yet they see the Gentiles entering it from all the corners of the earth while themselves are cast out. The unfaithful servant does not represent here the Pharisees but rather prefigures unfaithful Christian leaders. Like the Pharisees, he also belonged to the household of the master, was entrusted with an important mission and expected to remain in his position of honour irrespective of his behaviour. Thus, as was noted above, when he presents his talent he clearly expects his master to accept it gratefully. Yet, he who once was in finds himself unexpectedly cast out and this could only result in sadness for the loss, and anger at the master for not appreciating what he (mistakenly) considered an adequate service.

It is evident therefore, that as Luke in 13:28, Matthew uses language that would fit a contemporary setting concerning relations between masters and servants, and through it builds an allegory for the future kingdom of God. The language is not meant to contain hidden images of torment, but rather to express the disappointment of the loss of what was offered.

Conclusion on the Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth

We have seen that the phrase "weeping and gnashing of teeth" employs the common notions of weeping to denote sadness and gnashing of teeth to denote anger and sets them within an eschatological setting to describe the reaction of those left outside the kingdom.

Attempts to understand the expression as a description of the terrible torments of hell disregards first the linguistic function of the two verbs in other literature as well as the immediate context of the Synoptic (mainly Matthean) passages in which it occus, since nowhere does this context attempt to describe the torment of the wicked. Most often is used in parables about the kingdom where the punishment metted to those undeserving of its blessings is that they are thrown outside it.

Moreover, the "darkness that is outside" is likewise not the darkenss of hell (which, after all, is most commonly depicted as a place of raging fires). Rather, as the kingdom of God is repeatedly compared to a banquet especially in the parables in question, the darkness outside becomes the darkness of the night outside the banqueting hall and as such is an expression of exclusion, not torment.

Synopsis and Synthesis

The emphasis of this thesis has been "locales" of punishment in the Synoptic Gospels. Four are singled out and the relevant texts discussed: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss/Tartarus and the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. My purpose has been to attempt to understand the growth of the traditions associated with these terms and use them to gain an insight into the meaning of their use in the Synoptic tradition. A number of questions were therefore asked. What is the literary background that might have helped shape the language used in each of these motifs? How are the evangelists influenced by earlier and contemporaneous traditions associated with these locales? What images is the author trying to convey? How does the immediate and broader context shed light on ideas associated with each locale? Is there coherence in the way the evangelists developed these traditions? And finally, what do these Synoptic texts tell about the eschatological expectations of the authors?

The discussion of the Literary Background

With respect to the literary background of the locales discussed, two main observations may be made. The first (1) observation is that the dominant pool from which the imagery is drawn is the Old Testament. This is not to deny that extra-biblical influences have also helped shape traditions as, for example, in the similarities in language and imagery in such areas as the punishment of fallen angels. Nonetheless, the chief source of inspiration seems to have been the Hebrew Scriptures.

This Scriptural influence is especially evident with regards to "Gehenna" (Part I). Traditionally it has been presumed that the Gehenna language of the Gospels had been inspired by a perpetual fire that was burning in the valley of Hinnom outside the walls of Jerusalem where the city's rubbish was thrown to be consumed. This view, however, has fallen from favour in recent years primarily because there is no documentary evidence earlier than the thirteenth century testifying to the existence of such a dump. It has been, therefore, customary to look to contemporary extra-biblical Jewish literature for a possible source of inspiration. I have argued that such an

endeavour is wrought with uncertainty owing first to the obvious divergences between them and the Synoptic Gehenna traditions and secondly to the likelihood that the references preserved in the Jewish sources represent a later development of a Gehenna tradition. This is evident in that they entail more elaborate and embellished descriptions and that they are found in literary strata decidedly later than the Synoptic Gospels.

Given the inadequacy of the above attempts to locate possible sources for the Synoptic Gehenna, I have suggested that we should look to the Old Testament "judgement" texts that envision God punishing his enemies, be they apostate Jews, Gentiles or both, in a valley outside Jerusalem. The motif is fairly common and appears in different format in a number of prophetic oracles. The two that seem to have played a determinative role in the Synoptic language are the Jeremiah "valley of Hinnom" oracles (7:29-34 and 19:1-13) and Isaiah 66:24. The influence of these texts is visible most clearly in Mark 9:43-48 (Part I, Chapter II) where the Jeremiah oracles furnish the name Gehinnom, Hellenised to Gehenna, while Isaiah provides the image of the unquenchable fire and the destroying worm. Indeed, the consuming fire of the Lord surfaces repeatedly throughout both Isaiah (1:31; 5:24,25; 9:5,18,19; 10:16,17; 30:30,33; 43:17; cf. Jer. 17:27) and the Synoptic Gospels (Mt. 3:10-12; 7:19; 13:40,42,50; Lk. 3:9,17).

Luke's language also seems to derive from Isaiah 66:24 (Part I, Chapter VI). In his sole reference to Gehenna in 12:4-5 it is a place where the corpses of the wicked are thrown to be consumed after they have received their sentence. This is in contrast to Matthew and Mark, according to whom Gehenna is the place where the sentence is carried out (Mt. 5:22; 10:28; Mk. 9:43-48). Luke therefore, more closely reflects Isaiah 66:24 where the fire and the worms serve to consume the corpses of the enemies of God rather than act as agents of divine punishment.

The formative influence of the Old Testament is less prominent but nonetheless strong for the other three locales. "Hades" (Part II) is a Greek word denoting the "unseen" character of continued existence or non-existence after death. As such it became a convenient term to denote such divergent concepts as the physical grave, or the elaborate lively abode of the dead of the Hellenistic world. It was also employed as a term to translate the biblical Hebrew "Sheol". Sheol was thought to be the place of the dead in a general rather than individual sense – "the grave" rather than "a grave" (Part II, Chapter VII). It is a place of silence where

people, both good and bad, are laid in a horizontal position and have worms as their bed and dust for a cover. It is this notion of Hades that the Synoptics have taken over (Mt.11:20-24; possibly Lk. 10:12-15). An apparent departure seems to be the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31; Part II, Chapter X) with its detailed description of life and punishment in Hades. On closer examination, however, the parable serves to discredit rather than to approve such notions of an afterlife as it describes.

The "Abyss" and "Tartarus" are likewise Greek terms (Part III, Chapter XI). The first is a common noun denoting a great chasm or large body of water. The second is a proper name drawn from the struggles of gods and giants in Greek mythology. The two are used nearly synonymously as places of intermediate incarceration of fallen angels. It is difficult to point to specific Old Testament texts as immediate sources. Rather, the widespread use of both in contemporary Jewish literature indicates that the two nouns were taken over and incorporated easily into different understandings and theologies of angelic conflicts. It is in providing such a context that the Old Testament helped formulate the Abyss/Tartarus texts. Indeed Tartarus becomes the temporary prison of angels who sinned against God. As such, an interpretation of Old Testament angels provides the framework into which Greek terms are comfortably brought to fit.

With the "Outer Darkness" where there is "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" (Part IV) we again have no immediate Old Testament literary relation; nor for that matter non-biblical Jewish or Greek. The gnashing of teeth rather seems to have been a Semitic idiom used occasionally in Scripture to denote anger. In the Synoptics this idiom is combined with the idea of weeping and of darkness to create a lively motif of sorrow, anger and exclusion.

As such, the Jewish Scriptures provide a framework within which the Synoptics seem to operate. Often it also provides language and/or motifs as in the case of Gehenna, and the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, while at other times Greek terms that had been adopted into Jewish thought are brought to serve, but the framework remains essentially Hebrew and biblical. With regards to non-biblical Jewish works, their testimony helps to enlighten the understanding of the use of terms and there are certainly parallels with the Synoptics and broad thematic similarities. However, the evidence for a direct literary relationship is usually absent.

The second observation (2) to note from the discussions of the literary background of the Synoptic material is that in the Synoptics inherited motifs are not simply copied and pasted but are often reshaped and transformed with considerable ingenuity.

The two clearest examples are Gehenna and the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. The Synoptics draw the name Gehinnom from a known but hardly prominent Jeremiah oracle of divine punishment in a valley, and transform it into a byword for the eschatological punishment of the wicked in the Day of Judgement. It is not altogether clear whether this transformation was already taking place in Jewish thought, but the evidence does suggest that the Synoptics played a dominant role in creating a Gehenna tradition of eschatological punishment that we meet later, greatly embellished in Christian and rabbinic writings (Part I, Chapter I).

The case is even clearer with the Outer Darkness (Part IV). There is no close parallel in any of the extant contemporary or earlier literature. Originally the phrase must have appeared as a conclusion to a parable or saying about the kingdom of God being like a banquet. However, in the present form it appears appended to a series of parables and sayings even in instances where it does not fit the flow of the story and as such becomes a standard formula to depict the loss of the kingdom.

The Exegetical discussion of the relevant texts

The main body of the thesis dealt with the exegetical analysis of the texts of the four locales. I would like to make first one general observation before bringing together the finding on each locale individually. The general observation is that there is an overall coherence in the way the concepts associated with each locale is treated. Gehenna and the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth are always used in relation to the final judgement, that is, never to describe the state of the dead prior to the judgement. Conversely, Hades is the place of the dead who await the judgement rather than a description of the judgement itself. The Abyss, the abode of evil spirits, appears only once in the Synoptics (Lk. 8:31) so it is difficult to speak of Synoptic coherence, but the images it attempts to convey tie in well with other Synoptic references to the activities of evil spirits (Lk. 11:24-26; Mk. 5:10). It also parallels to a certain extent the Abyss occurrences of Revelation (9:1,3; 11 9:7; 17:8).

Moving on from this general observation, there are a number of issues this research has brought to the fore, which may best be overviewed by looking at each locale individually. Gehenna (Part I) is perhaps the most dominant locale used in relation to the final judgement. The first element that became immediately apparent is Matthew's preference for the term. Matthew draws his material from Mk and Q as well as his special source M and refers to Gehenna a total of six times in five different pericopes (5:22; 10:28; 5:29; 18:10; 23:15,33) in contrast to Mark's three times in one pericope (9:43-48) and Luke's one in one (12:4-5). A similar Matthean dominance is true of the other day of judgement locale the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth (Part IV). The two testify to Matthew's special interest in the day of judgement in contrast to Mark and Luke's more passing references. The question of how this interest in the fate of the wicked fits into Matthew's overall theological scheme has been beyond the scope of this study and is a topic worth exploring further.

A second element conspicuously present in all three gospels is the emphasis on the body. Of the ten Gehenna texts the body is specifically mentioned in six (Mk. 9:43,45,47; Mt. 5:29; 10:28; 18:8) strongly implied in another (Lk. 12:4-5) and not precluded in the remaining (Mt. 5:22; 23:15,33). This emphasis underlines two points. First, the final judgement is preceded by a bodily resurrection of the wicked. Clearly there can be no judgement on the body if the body is not resurrected. Second, the notion that judgement only takes place on corporeal persons intimates that there is no judgement in supposed other forms of existence. The emphasis on judgement on the body therefore seems to preclude any punishment on the interval from death to judgement.

A third element is the striking absence of detailed descriptions of torment so common in other Jewish and Christian, contemporary and later descriptions of the final judgement. Indeed, Gehenna is nowhere in the Synoptics presented as a place of torment. Rather, it is a place of destruction. This is intimated in the motifs that lie behind it. Both the Gehinnom oracles of Jeremiah 7:29-34 and 19:1-13 and Isaiah 66:24 that seem to have influenced the Gehenna language of the gospels depict the destruction rather than torment of the wicked. It is also evidenced in the Synoptic language used to describe it. It is a place of fire, but not the fire usually associated with hell that torments but does not consume. Rather, it is the Isaianic fire that burns and consumes as easily and thoroughly as fire consumes chaff, or dead trees (Mt.

3:10,12; Lk. 3:9; cf. Is. 1:31; 43:17). The nature of the punishment is vividly brought out in Matthew 10:28 (Part I, Chapter IV) where it is compared to temporal death and is found to be more fearful. While temporal death removes life there is still the hope of the resurrection. In contrast the destruction of Gehenna is total and final with no hope of regress because God himself oversees it. The finality of Gehenna is also forcefully presented in Matthew 5:22-23 (Part I, Chapter V) where it is compared to the capital punishment ancient Hebrew courts were entitled to pass on certain offences.

The destructive imagery associate with Gehenna reaches an apogee in Luke 12:4-5 (Part I, Chapter VI). In language reminiscent of Isaiah 66:24 Luke sees it not as a place where destruction is inflicted on the wicked but rather as the place where the corpses of those already destroyed in the final judgement are thrown to be burned and consumed. Gehenna, therefore, becomes the place of the annihilation of corpses and impurities and as such brings to a conclusion the punitive work of the judgement.

In light of this emphasis on destruction rather than torment it is no surprise to find the worms of Isaiah 66:24 in action (Mk. 9:43-48). It is not a worm that torments as grotesquely presented in later Christian works but rather the maggots that feed on the dead and the other impurities.

Hades (Part II) on the other hand is not a place of punishment and no torments of any sort are involved. It is nowhere clearly related to the final judgement. While there is a possibility that in Luke 10:15 Hades might refer to the final judgement, the evidence is far from clear. Hades is rather a generic name for the place where the dead await the resurrection, the grave. It is the opposite of heaven both geographically in the sense that heaven is above and Hades below, and qualitatively in the sense that heaven represents life and Hades death. As such it gains certain notoriety. While Capernaum and other towns thought themselves lifted to heaven, they will find themselves in Hades (Mt 11:20-24; Lk 10:12-15 – Part II, Chapter VIII). But Hades does not have the negative associations of Gehenna. It is not only the wicked that go there but everybody. Even Jesus in Matthew 16:18 (Part II, Chapter IX) foretells his death but assures that the "gates of Hades" shall not prevail to keep him in the grave. Apart from the fact that it is associated with death, it is a neutral place.

In Luke 16:19-31 (Part II, Chapter X) the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus at first sight departs radically from the above picture. The two dead

protagonists are pictured as fully conscious, fluent in conversation and thought, one in bliss and the other in carefully described torment in Hades, both in bodily form. As such the parable seems to negate what is said and implied elsewhere of both Hades and Gehenna as well as other statements about the dead and retribution. This fact has perplexed commentators who, recognising the inconsistent images warn that the depiction of the afterlife in the parable should not be taken seriously. At the same time they are not sure how to explain its function. On closer examination it becomes evident that the parable has been modelled on a genre of popular stories on the afterlife a number of which are still extant. I have argued that by careful use of humour/sarcasm and hyperbole as well as by the pointed replies of "father Abraham" the parable serves to negate the very concepts it appears to espouse. As such, we should not attempt to fit its depictions into any pattern or expect it to cohere with other Hades texts. Its function is quite specific and its contribution to an overall understanding of what Hades represents in the Synoptics relates only to what the parable deconstructs, since this is its primary function.

It is important to underline the relationship of Hades to Gehenna in the Synoptics outlined above especially in the light of the tendency of later Christian writings, and indeed of modern English usage that translates both as "hell", to conflate the terms. There is a clear chronological and qualitative difference between the two. Chronologically, a person who dies goes to Hades. In the resurrection that person exits Hades and goes to heaven or Gehenna. Qualitatively, Hades is the neutral place where all the dead await their fate in silent unconsciousness. Gehenna is the place where only the wicked go either to receive their punishment (Mt. Mk.) or once they have received their punishment (Lk.).

Tartarus and the Abyss (Part III) are two designations that refer to the temporary imprisonment of fallen angels. Of the two, only the latter appears in the gospels but owing to their close relationship both have been examined. The Abyss is often depicted in Jewish writings, primarily the collection that has come to be known as 1 Enoch, as a temporary prison in which fallen angels suffer in anticipation of the coming judgement. The data in the Synoptics is not rich enough to support definitive conclusions. The indication is however that the Abyss is understood to be a locale or state that limits the power of demons over men (Lk. 8:31 - Part III, Chapter XII). They can be cast into it, or come out from it. Punishment is not associated with it; indeed a comparison with Tartarus in 2 Peter 2:4 (Part III, Chapter XI, Excursus)

suggests that whatever punishment is due on the fallen angels it will come in the final judgement. Nonetheless, the limitations entailed in being cast into the Abyss cause the demons to fear being cast there. What is clear is that no humans are sent there; it is only an angelic prison.

Finally, with the motif of the Outer Darkness and the Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth (Part IV) we return to the theme of the final judgement and the area covered by Gehenna. Commentators like Davies and Allison have pointed to the raging fires of Gehenna and the darkness entailed in this motif as a contradiction. How can there be absolute darkness in a place filled with fire? More traditional writers like Lenski regarded the two images as testimony to the mysterious and supernatural horror of hell. Darkness can be fearful and intimidating. Fire is terrifying. Combine the two and the result is absolute terror, the idea usually associated with hell.

Both these approaches miss the mark. Those who see a contradiction fail to take into account the context of the Outer Darkness texts. The Outer Darkness and Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth usually appear as a conclusion to parables in connection to a banquet (Mt 8:12; 22:13; 24:51). The comparison of the kingdom to a banquet is metaphorical and therefore so is the Outer Darkness. Since most banquets took place in the evening, to be thrown to the Outer Darkness literally means to be excluded from the lighted, happy halls of the feast. It is a metaphorical expression of exclusion from the kingdom and not a literal description of the final judgement.

Those who regard the phrase as a description of the dread of hell likewise fail to note the context. Darkness denotes exclusion from the kingdom. Weeping describes the reaction of the lost. Gnashing of teeth is a sign of anger. Since the ones usually described as being left outside are usually the Jewish spiritual leaders who have refused to believe in Jesus, the gnashing of teeth become understandable – they think they deserve to be in but are out.

The Weeping and Gnashing are not tied to any time frame. We are not told how long those excluded will cry and gnash their teeth, for such a question is unfitting in the light of the context. The image is not intended to be a description of hell but rather underlines the sadness of the loss of the kingdom. The very fact that the emphasis is on what is lost rather than any punishment (none is mentioned) should preclude us from reading into it any notion of torment or prolonged duration of anguish. Indeed, the context of the parables in which the saying appears, rich in military image indicates that destruction rather than torment is involved.

Gehenna and the Outer Darkness where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth bring together two different but not contradictory images of the final judgement. The depictions of Gehenna show God taking the initiative to bring the wicked and wickedness to an end. The images of the fire, the maggots, the destruction they bring is without a doubt fearful. Yet it swiftly comes to an end. The Weeping and Gnashing underlines the sadness of the loss. Perhaps the fact that even while outside not only do they not repent but gnash their teeth in anger at God for their exclusion underlines the confidence of the evangelists that they deserve their fate. As such, the two images of the final judgement as represent in Gehenna and the Outer Darkness approach the topic from two different angles.

The above summary and synthesis of the locales discussed indicates that this research has not been exhaustive. There are Synoptic texts that though relevant have only received a passing comment, or none at all. Chief among these is the judgement scene of Matthew 25:31-46. This omission is deliberate for the simple reason that while the above passage entails a judgement scene, it says little about the punishment envisaged and, more importantly, does not tie it to any specific place. The locales discussed, primarily Gehenna and the Outer Darkness play a prominent even dominant role in the Synoptic language of punishment. By concentrating on these texts, I have attempted to build a framework and gain an insight on the nature of the expectations of the evangelists with regards to punishment, the judgement and the afterlife. Further research could determine the extent to which other related Synoptic texts fit into the above framework. Nonetheless, we have discerned a level of consistency with which the motifs are handled. Gehenna and the Outer Darkness are always connected to the final judgement, Hades is a place of waiting, the Abyss always a prison of fallen angels. As such the picture that has emerged can be a contribution to the understanding of eschatological punishment in the Synoptic Gospels.

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